

# THE FORTNIGHTLY

---

NOVEMBER, 1935

---

## ANGLO-JAPANESE RELATIONS

BY BARON KEISHIRO MATSUI

*[The following article presents, with the authority of a former Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs and Ambassador in London, the case for a better understanding between Britain and Japan. While it is written from the Japanese point of view, it is of special interest in view of the proposed Naval Conference and Sir Frederick Leith-Ross's mission to China to study the economic future of that country.]*

I HAD the privilege to attend the annual dinner given by the Japan-British Society in Tokyo last May in honour of the King's Silver Jubilee. While all the company joined whole-heartedly in wishing His Britannic Majesty a long, prosperous reign, the joyful occasion made me feel strongly that the time was at hand for a careful consideration of Anglo-Japanese relations.

The relations between Japan and Great Britain have always been cordial, and the Japanese generally have entertained the friendliest feelings towards, and a high regard for, the British people. The two nations have many points in common: in their profound attachment to traditions and ancient institutions; in their rise from comparatively small island nations to great sea powers; and in various other respects. These facts went far towards promoting the mutual understanding and goodwill of the two nations, which finally came to form an alliance, stimulated by external circumstances, and united by a community of interest, aims, and ideals.

The Anglo-Japanese Alliance will always be remembered as a masterpiece in the diplomatic history of Japan and England. It is unnecessary here to dwell on its immense contribution

towards the maintenance of the peace of East Asia and of the world.

Japan has remained since the opening of the country on the best of terms with the United States of America as well as with Great Britain. But the Anglo-Japanese Alliance and the Russo-Japanese War marked a turning point in Japanese-American relations, which failed to keep step with the auspicious development of those between Japan and Britain. That was in a sense a high price for Japan to pay. But the Japanese nation was willing to stay as a faithful partner of the alliance at any cost. On the other hand, after the World War opposition to the alliance gained ground in England and especially in the Dominions—an opposition born of a regard for American feelings in addition to other considerations. Thus, the Anglo-Japanese Alliance was dropped in 1922 with the conclusion of the Four Power Treaty at Washington. From then onwards the friendship between Japan and Great Britain began to lose its former warmth. However, it would be rash to attribute to the abandonment of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance alone the unhappy turn that the relations between Japan and Great Britain have taken during the past decade or more. It seems to me that there are more general and ineluctable reasons, which are to be found in the march of mankind or, in other words, in the very law of progress.

I have already enumerated the similarities existing between our two nations. But there are also dissimilarities, which must now be pointed out. Ours is a "Land of the Rising Sun", whereas on the British Empire, as is proudly declared, the sun never sets. There is a real significance in these symbolic phrases, which cannot be ignored. More than three hundred years ago Britons first stepped out into the wide world. The doughty sons of England scoured the seven seas, despoiled their precursors—the Portuguese and Spaniards—of their lands and riches, acquired new territories and, in a brief period and without meeting much resistance, founded an immense empire. Today Great Britain is a country powerful, rich, and mature. Japan, on the contrary, awoke just eighty years ago, only to find the continents of the world all divided among occidental Powers so that there was no such room or chance for expansion as was at the disposal of the early English empire-builders.



Japan, small in area, poor in natural resources, is harassed by the problem of population. The country to-day, crowded with 80 million people, active, alert, and vigorous, is very much like an old skin that cannot hold the new wine. Nevertheless, we cannot acquire new territories as the British acquired them with so little trouble. Across the waters of the Pacific we see vast lands, including Canada, New Zealand, and Australia, which await the coming of able, efficient and industrious pioneers, but which are absolutely closed as far as Japanese are concerned. The authorities of these Dominions state that they have no prejudice against the Japanese as a people, but cannot accept Japanese immigrants because of our low standard of living. On the basis of their apparent belief that the culture and civilization of a nation are determined by the level of its standard of living, the British and other advanced nations of the West claim that they are striving to lift the backward peoples to a higher standard of living and thus to advance their culture and civilization.

We do not find it necessary to discuss whether the reasons for the anti-Japanese legislation in the British Dominions are racial or economic. Nor do we care to send emigrants to states where the entry of Japanese is not desired. But we are endeavouring to realize a higher standard of living and to promote culture and civilization—an endeavour with which the Western nations should surely have no quarrel. Now, how are we to achieve that end—how acquire wealth when our land is so small and poor, and the door for immigration is closed on all hands? The only means that is left—as is plain to anyone—is the development of our industry and commerce.

By dint of diligence and perseverance we improved the organization and technique of our industry and commerce, and were ready to ship our merchandise abroad. But the very moment we had reached that stage, China, our nearest and most important market, was closed as the result of the political campaign against Japanese goods. Japan was forced to seek markets elsewhere. Then the British merchants and manufacturers raised a hue and cry over the so-called menace of Japanese goods, and conducted agitations in all parts of the globe. Great Britain; the British possessions and colonies such as India, the Straits

Settlement, Ceylon; the British Dominions like Canada and South Africa; and other countries under British influence—all proceeded to curb Japanese imports by raising customs duties or by the imposition of exchange compensation duties and quota systems. Japan's protests on the ground that discriminatory treatment such as was meted out to Japanese goods by the quota systems constituted a violation of the most-favoured-nation clause of the treaty of commerce between Japan and Great Britain were of no avail.

Although the natives in the British colonies welcome Japanese goods on account of their low price and good quality, the British authorities seem to be only intent upon protecting the interest of a few producers at the expense of the large numbers of consumers. As a matter of fact, the balance of the Japanese-British Empire trade is in favour of the British Empire by 20 per cent., while the total volume of our foreign trade, even at the latest date of its expansion, constitutes only 3 per cent. of the total volume of the world's foreign trade, of which Great Britain does 13 per cent., the United States 12 per cent., Germany 9 per cent., and France 8 per cent. In the face of these figures it is inconceivable that the competition of Japanese goods can be a menace to the world market, which still holds so much room for exploitation.

England, having furled her banner of free trade, which she had carried for so many years, is now trying to protect her industries by measures of control based on political power. Some critics doubt if England by such means alone, without effecting the necessary improvements in industrial efficiency and organization, can in the long run obtain the best results, although this is, of course, a matter that must be left solely to the judgment of the English people themselves. At the same time, Japan and other countries are compelled to ponder deeply whether a great country like Britain, with its vast overseas territories, rich natural resources and extensive markets, is justified in closing the doors of those territories for its own selfish interest alone, and whether such a step is conducive to the promotion of world commerce and trade and to the maintenance of universal peace.

Britain possesses territories in all parts of the world, in-



habited by all kinds of races. The British, with their adroit methods of handling alien peoples, have been successful in their colonial administration, adopting such policy as is best suited to the peculiar circumstances of each one of these territories. Britain has grown in wealth by drawing raw material for her manufacturing industries from her far-flung possessions and by marketing finished articles back to them. We hear frequently of European exploitations of Asiatic and African colonies for European prosperity. Of such exploitations, if they may be so regarded, the British Empire presents an excellent example. However, the Asiatic peoples, including those under British rule, are nowadays beginning to awaken and to assert themselves, though gradually. The hand of the Imperial Government cannot but feel in more than one way the force of this slow but deep-rooted movement. Herein lies, I believe, one of the acutest problems that to-day confront the British Empire. The Government of India Act recently placed on the Statute Book may perhaps be taken as a straw showing which way the wind is blowing.

The British Empire, which has everything in the world, naturally wishes to continue enjoyment of what it now possesses. But it is obvious that a policy of maintenance of the *status quo* is unacceptable to those nations which, under the existing conditions, can neither live nor thrive. The present situation in Europe is an eloquent revelation of this fact. It is inevitable that elsewhere in the world there should also be collisions between the aspirations of the subject races and the pressure for the maintenance of the *status quo* exercised by the Governments which rule and hold them in leash.

It is the law of progress that backward countries should develop at a more rapid pace than the advanced nations in order to catch up, and it is the law of human nature that every people should aspire to rise to the high level set up by others. The peoples of Asia are now moving forward at a very swift rate to overtake the nations of Europe and America. This awakening of Asia may be traced to the victory of Japan over Russia, one of the greatest of European Powers. For some two hundred and twenty years the Japanese lived the life of a hermit nation under the seclusionist policy of the Tokugawa Shogunate. But

with the Restoration of Meiji the country opened its doors to foreign intercourse, bringing into full play the long-pent energy of the race. Japan has forged ahead with an amazing speed during the past eighty years. Having consolidated her position after successive foreign wars, she is now admittedly the leader of all Asiatic races, and as a matter of fact is being made to serve as the model for their national reconstruction and development and for their international advancement. Hence, the growth and progress of Japan affects Great Britain not only directly, but also indirectly through the reaction they have on the latter's subject peoples in Asia. That is one aspect of Anglo-Japanese relations in the Asiatic field.

Anglo-Japanese relations in Eastern Asia centre about Chinese problems. China has long been the object of numerous international treaties and agreements between occidental Powers on territorial integrity, equal opportunity, and the Open Door, and what not. The Powers have entered into various relationships between themselves, making China not a principal party to their treaties, but an object to which those treaties were applied. Dr. Sun Yat-sen, the founder of the Kuomintang, with which the present Nanking Government is identified, used to preach the so-called "Great Asia Doctrine", advocating a concert of all Asiatic nations—especially of Japan and China. After the death of the leader, the Kuomintang launched upon an anti-foreign campaign with slogans such as "Abrogation of Unequal Treaties", or "Down with Imperialism", although the party was often unscrupulous enough to invoke even those treaties, humiliating as they were to China, if such a step served the purpose of playing off one Power against another.

The history of European penetration of China was begun with the Opium War some ninety years ago by Great Britain which, apart from Russia, has long played the most prominent role. Starting with the acquisition of Hong-kong, the British leased Weihaiwei and Kaolung, and established concessions in various cities in China, in addition to acquiring suzerainty in Burma, and securing a special position in Tibet. They also took over the control, direct or indirect, of the Chinese Maritime Customs, the Salt Gabelle and the postal administration. They acquired various railway rights and numerous commercial con-



cessions. In China they came to occupy a position far superior to that of other occidental Powers. Here again British policy aimed principally at the maintenance of the *status quo*.

However, more recently the British were compelled, because of the violence of the Chinese campaign for the recovery of rights, to abandon part of their concessions, and their commercial rights have suffered certain abridgments. Britain's policy since 1927 seems, therefore, to have been to evade the brunt of the Chinese anti-foreign campaign and to rehabilitate her commercial position in China. Friendship was cultivated with Chiang Kai-shek and his group in the South and with Chang Tso-lin and his son in the North, while the British Government supported the Nanking Government. Now it should be borne in mind that the fundamental aim of the Kuomintang lies in the liberation of China according to the doctrine of the "Three Principles and Five Rights". In the last analysis, the party represents the nationalist movement of Asiatic races in general. Deep in the hearts of the Kuomintang leaders there burns the flame of the idea of Great Asia as propounded by Sun Yat-sen. Can Britain really subscribe to such a doctrine, even indirectly? Is it possible for Great Britain to deal with Chinese, Indian, and all other Asiatic peoples under one consistent policy? I believe there is no small difficulty. On the other hand, the stand of Japan in this regard is entirely different. Any discussion of Anglo-Japanese relations in China must take into full consideration the respective stands of Great Britain and Japan towards China with reference to the general movement of the Asiatic races.

Anglo-Japanese relations require readjustment also in view of the establishment of the independent State of Manchukuo, which stands to Japan in an inseparable and interdependent relation. When Japan recognized Manchukuo in order to maintain and preserve peace and stability in East Asia, Great Britain and other occidental Powers in the League of Nations, without adequate comprehension of the situation in this region, opposed the independence of the new state. That the head of the Inquiry Commission despatched by the League happened to be Lord Lytton was unfortunate for Anglo-Japanese relations. Although many of us do not consider that his views represented

British public opinion, the Japanese people in general have been led to believe those views to have been a reflection of British national sentiments. Again, while we appreciate the earnest endeavours of the British delegates at Geneva towards conciliation between Japan and the League of Nations, the fact remains that Great Britain, a most influential member of the League, voted for the adoption of the resolution by the Assembly for non-recognition of Manchukuo and for legalization of the Chinese boycott of Japanese merchandise—a resolution which did so much to aggravate the situation in our part of the globe.

The existence of Manchukuo as an independent state is beyond dispute, the new empire having made such splendid progress since its establishment. Great Britain, which had refused recognition to Manchukuo in accordance with the Lytton Report, soon found it impossible to ignore her relations with the empire. The Barnby Mission was sent, therefore, to investigate the situation. Nevertheless, that mission was of an unofficial character, and its chief errand consisted in the promotion of British economic interests in Manchukuo. Naturally, it did not carry the necessary weight for counteracting the Lytton Report. The resolution of the League on non-recognition of Manchukuo still remains in force, obliging Great Britain and other Powers to take an awkward position on questions concerning Manchukuo.

Take, for instance, the questions of the oil monopoly or extra-territoriality. Great Britain and other Powers claim the privileges of extra-territoriality in Manchukuo territory as before, and they have protested to Japan against the oil monopoly as an infringement of the principles of the Open Door and Equal Opportunity, by invoking the Nine Power Treaty or by citing the Declaration of Independence and the Communication to foreign governments issued by the Government of Manchukuo in March, 1932. The contentions of the British and other governments are based on the assumption that the Nine Power Treaty is applicable to Manchukuo, but the obligations of such political agreements as the Nine Power Treaty are not transferable to Manchukuo without the latter's express declaration of willingness to accept them. The Powers argue that since they have not recognized Manchukuo, and her territory still constitutes



in their eyes a part of China, the Nine Power Treaty is still operative there. The logic may be valid. But in that case the Powers would have to deal with the Chinese Government in all their "Manchurian" questions, which is surely an absurd proposition in the face of present realities. So long as the British Government continue to disregard the actual conditions in Manchukuo and fail to arrive at a rational interpretation of the country's status in East Asia, there will inevitably be differences of views between Japan and Great Britain on questions pertaining to that country.

Japan as a stabilizing force in East Asia is endeavouring to keep the peace there by all means. It was for the sake of preserving peace in East Asia that we fought China and Russia and participated in the Great War. It was because Japan has played the role of watch-dog that peace has been maintained in this part of the world. In fact, the national existence of Japan and other East Asiatic countries depends upon peace in East Asia. Great Britain and other occidental Powers may have large and important interests in East Asia, but those interests only affect their commercial prosperity, whereas Japan's interests there constitute a question of life and death. There is a fundamental difference between Japanese interests and occidental interests in East Asia. That is why Japan volunteers to shoulder the responsibilities of the maintenance of peace in this region.

Great Britain should first understand fully the position and aims of Japan in East Asia. If Great Britain has a thorough comprehension of these, there can arise no occasion for friction between her and Japan. Japan has no intention to expel or to impair British interests in East Asia, but she is anxious to adjust the interests of the two countries wherever they may collide.

One of the momentous international problems involving Anglo-Japanese relations is that now pending with regard to naval disarmament. As was clearly set forth during the tripartite preliminary conversations in London last year, Japan stands for equality of naval strength for the three major sea Powers of the world, and for the reduction of that strength to the lowest level possible. The views of the Japanese Government are

that each Power should possess only such a navy as is incapable of menacing or attacking another but sufficient for defending itself, and should try to achieve the real aim of disarmament and to lighten the tax burden of the people, and thus contribute to the cause of world peace. The Japanese claim to parity has been recognized in principle by the British Government, but because the latter's proposal for the voluntary declaration of building programmes amounts in practice to setting up an actual disparity in naval force, Japan and Great Britain have not yet reached an agreement of views.

Now I imagine that the British Government realize the necessity of relying upon the Japanese navy for the preservation of peace and order in the Pacific east of Singapore. From the naval viewpoint, may it not be said that the Pacific is divided roughly into natural defence areas for the navies of the Powers? This idea is embodied in the statement attributed to Secretary Swanson to the effect that the American Navy should defend the Eastern Pacific and the Japanese the Western, with the 180th meridian as the dividing line. Though the statement was denied later, it very probably reflects American public opinion. Of course, the role of the British Navy in the South Pacific is not forgotten in this connection. If Great Britain and the Dominion states understand correctly the position and aims of Japan, they will at once realize the role allotted to the Japanese Navy in the Pacific, and thus admit the justice and fairness of Japan's naval claims. I am of the opinion that on the naval question between Japan and Great Britain it should not be over-difficult to find a way to a satisfactory solution.

Anglo-Japanese relations are multiform and complex. I regret I cannot for lack of space go further into the tripartite relations among Great Britain, Japan, and America, and must leave untouched that phase of Anglo-Japanese relations which concerns the Soviet Union. Let me summarize, however, the one basic argument, which can never be over-emphasized. The most urgent problem for present-day Japan is how and where to direct the nation's overflowing power of growth. As I have said before, we cannot, as the British did in the old days, seek new territories, nor are we allowed to send emigrants to European and American countries or their colonies. The only path for



our national growth is in the direction of the continent of Asia, while we have no other means but the expansion of industry and commerce for the enhancement of our economic well-being and prosperity. Great Britain and her Dominions, while refusing Japanese immigration, took at the time of the Manchurian incident an attitude as if they were bent upon interfering with Japan's advance along the only path left to her. And finally they are closing their markets to Japanese trade. Are we to live or perish, flourish or wither away? We cannot but contemplate with grave concern the enormous obstacles that beset the path of our nation.

Obviously, friendly relations between Japan and Great Britain cannot be promoted by harping on the traditional amity since the days of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. It is necessary to effect readjustments of the fundamental matters underlying those relations. Will the British try, or not, to shut out Japanese goods from their markets, to prevent the peaceful growth and expansion of Japan, to close the only path for Japanese advance? And finally, do they recognize the awakening and the evolutionary progress of all Asiatic races? All these questions must be answered to the satisfaction of the Japanese, dispelling all misgivings. The two countries should first clear away all sources of political friction through mutual understanding of their respective stands in East Asia, and then seek the elimination of the economic friction which is produced by artificial trade barriers. When the political and economic friction is removed, Anglo-Japanese relations will be put once for all upon a sound and enduring basis.

Sir Samuel Hoare said at the banquet of the Japan Society of London on June 19 this year: "Though there may be many difficulties between Great Britain and Japan, the peoples of the two countries should discuss them frankly and freely as friends who are anxious that each should understand the other's point of view and that a proper understanding and collaboration between Great Britain and Japan are essential to the stability and prosperity not only of Asia, but of the world". Indeed, it is so. The need for Anglo-Japanese understanding and co-operation along all lines, including the problems of East Asia, of naval limitation, of trade and commerce, has never been so great as now.

## THE MILITARIZATION OF ITALY

BY LIEUT.-COLONEL H. DE WATTEVILLE, C.B.E.

UNTIL after the Franco-Prussian war, little attention was paid in Italy to the development of any military doctrine. Then, as that campaign began to fade into history, the dazzling successes of the Prussian arms, together with the unification of the various Italian states, combined to direct current Italian thought towards organizing a new national army that should be animated with some appropriate doctrine of war. Somewhere about 1875 Generals Marselli and Zanelli began to evolve that new doctrine, and, as was inevitable at that period, both they and their successors turned towards Germany for inspiration. Thus it followed that the German doctrine of war, as first expounded by Clausewitz, came to be adopted for the spiritual guidance of the Italian Army in days to come. The main tendencies of the Clausewitzian teachings are familiar : they rest primarily on the belief that war is " a continuation of national policy by other means", i.e., by force in lieu of pacific diplomacy when policy considers it expedient to take such action ; that victory in war is to be won by the deployment of the maximum degree of force ; that the surest road to success is found in weight of numbers and by violence of strategy ; that war can only be conducted in a ruthless spirit and, if necessary, at the cost of much blood ; lastly, that the cultivation of the military virtues must largely be a matter for national education.

The new Italian army was not destined to be faced with the true reality of war until the conflict with Abyssinia in 1896. It cannot be said that the Italian forces emerged from that ordeal with any success. There was so much mismanagement at home that General Baratieri, the commander-in-chief on the spot, although a competent soldier, succumbed to pressure from Rome, and acted with undue temerity. After the opening Italian successes, and except for a few later episodes when the



Italians fought with desperate gallantry, the whole campaign showed that the young Italian state was not equal to the strain of a warlike undertaking of that calibre.

The next Italian campaign was the Libyan expedition of 1911. Here the natural difficulties and the strength of the opposition were never so formidable as in Abyssinia. Even so, the war dragged on in desultory fashion, since the leadership lacked boldness and rapidity, while the control of affairs in Rome proved weak. In some quarters, at any rate, the campaign was regarded as a good opportunity to consume obsolescent war material and stores.

With these operations still in progress, the Great War broke out, and Libya was all but totally neglected. By this time Italian military thought had made some progress. General Pollio, then Chief of the General Staff, had in his well-known writings shown that he was gifted with strategic insight; while other soldiers, such as Guerrini and Barone, were responsible for publications which indicated a renaissance of the military art to be impending. Nevertheless, when Italy entered the field against Austria in 1915, General Cadorna, the Italian commander-in-chief, soon found that between his own conceptions of war—backed though they were by many of the more advanced Italian leaders—and those of the army at large there existed some divergence. Cadorna was trying to wage war with an instrument in the making of which he had had no say, whilst it proved unsuited to carrying out his intentions. After many gallantly fought battles on the Isonzo, the Italians completely broke down in late 1917, after the fierce thrust of six German divisions at Caporetto had initiated the catastrophe of that name. The military spirit of young Italy still lacked the traditions and solidity that characterized the older Western European armies. Nevertheless, even before the end of the Great War, symptoms of a warlike recovery took place.

It was not, however, until after the advent of the Fascist regime, born of the events of 1922, that a complete change in military thought swept through Italy. The Libyan war, then in its twelfth year, was taken in hand by the new authorities, and very soon was reduced to manageable proportions; shortly, indeed, it could be regarded as brought to a successful close.

This circumstance was almost wholly due to a complete change in the higher direction of affairs, both in Rome and on the spot. As a result, the desire for a military regeneration rapidly gathered way.

Between 1919 and 1923 many schemes for the reorganization of the Italian forces had been put forward. Each was an improved version of its predecessor, but they all more or less took into consideration a possible reduction of armed forces in Europe while tending to lighten the military burden of Italy. But under the new Fascist guidance all such thoughts went by the board, and the national armed forces were gradually re-organized and re-equipped, until the final reconstruction of 1934-35 placed the defence forces of Italy on a level which aspires to approach that of France—at any rate in numbers and organization, if not in armament and resources.

The greatest change, however, was to take place in the military spirit of the whole Italian people. Starting from the premises that the bulk of Italians were seriously deficient in moral discipline, and that the nation as a whole lacked the self-confidence and solidarity which should be regarded as the true source of national greatness in a competitive world, Mussolini placed himself at the head of a great regenerative movement; not that the Italian character—so he claimed—was wanting in the more robust and manly virtues, but because during many centuries Italian political education and development had been debased by its environment and by exterior influences. The national virtues had been perverted, and they must now be redeemed. That goal was to be attained through the influence of Fascism, and by the example and activity of the Fascist Militia.

Owing, perhaps, to the time and to the circumstances in which that movement was born; owing to the manner in which it installed itself in authority; still more because it stood for a reaction against the beliefs and conduct which had heralded the great *débâcle* of 1917, no less than the moral decline of Italy in long years past, the Fascist aspirations for reform assumed, from the very outset, a strongly militaristic complexion. This bias was intensified by Mussolini's own flaming patriotism and by his grandiloquent references to the resurrection of Imperial Rome. Although much of the braggadoccio with which Fascist



pronouncements are normally tricked out may be ascribed to a national penchant for the exuberant and the dramatic, it is difficult not to see in the *crescendo* of Fascist utterances a growing inclination to aggressive militarism pure and simple. From being the weapon of a young and forceful political party, the Fascist organization has now tightened its hold on the whole Italian nation until it has even appropriated to itself the defence forces of the State. This permeation of the Italian people reached its climax when in September, 1934, it was enacted by ministerial decree that the entire manhood of Italy must pass through the Fascist Militia. At the same time Fascist units were incorporated as *élite* troops in all the higher formations of the Italian army. Thus could General Teruzzi, the commander-in-chief of the Fascist Militia, justly claim that "the moral and technical fusion of army and militia will henceforth be complete".

The rise of the Fascist Militia in Italy has thus followed an entirely different course from that of the Hitlerite "storm troops" in Germany. In the latter case, as soon as the Nazi regime became firmly established, the Brownshirts found themselves in virtual rivalry with the Reichswehr. The latter, being firmly entrenched in authority, having kept aloof from politics and embodying all the best traditions of the German nation, proved far too strongly situated ever to be dethroned or absorbed by a para-military organization such as that of the Brownshirts. In the end, the shootings of June 30th, 1934, marked the complete failure of the Hitlerite storm troops to occupy the seats of authority in Germany. Hitler himself very wisely elected to transfer his support to the regular army. Not so in Italy, where the army, being based on universal service and not being a caste by itself, never having possessed either similar authority or similar traditions, nor the inward solidity of its German counterpart, was in the end swallowed up by Fascism, and so finally has become its virtual servitor.

As things now are, at the age of 8 years all boys are enrolled in the Fascist *Balilla*, in which they are exercised in games and sports with the object of engendering in them feelings of corporate loyalty and hardihood. From 14 years upwards the lads belong to the *Avanguardisti*, where training assumes a more military complexion. A feature is made of the selection of

under-officers from among any youths who show aptitude for command. The youths on completing their eighteenth year pass into the *Fasci Giovanili di Combattimento*,\* where the training aims solely at preparing the future recruits for army, navy, and air force. Finally, on attaining 21 years of age, the young men enter the regular army, where they serve approximately twenty-one months. On completion of his colour-service the trained man returns to the militia for the performance of such reserve exercises, which do not require his return to the colours, for the next ten years.

The whole system of training with the Fascist Militia from start to finish presents many excellent features ; but rumour has it that it forms a convenient method for political propaganda and surveillance. In view of the gullibility of the Italian peasant and the prevalent Italian lack of interest in books and papers, the Fascist Militia can at least be regarded as a potent vehicle for swaying public opinion.

In addition, the Fascist authorities have instituted theoretical and military training in the " Third Class " of all intermediate schools ; in the " First " and " Second Classes " of every *Liceo classico* ; also in high schools and in twenty-six universities of Italy. In the first category the instruction is elementary, and deals with the defence forces of Italy and map reading. In the second, it is more practical and directed towards forming future reserve officers. In the third, there are practical exercises, while lectures are given on future warfare and on the measures to be taken to prepare for it.

On mobilization, the Fascist Militia is to assume all duties connected with customs and protection of coasts and frontiers ; it is to enter into full responsibility for all coast defence works ; it will manage and implement all measures of passive and active ground defence against aerial attack. Every militiaman between the ages of 18 and 20 years is liable for service in units organized for these tasks.

A yet more important recent development, already alluded to above, was the creation in 1934 of special Blackshirt battalions, machine-gun companies and cyclist units for service with the regular army corps ; each of the latter is to receive, on mobili-

---

\* This is best translated by " The Fighting Union of Youth ".



zation, four or five such battalions and a few other units of the Militia. The latter will be composed of the cream of Fascism, all picked men under 36 years of age, every one of whom, almost without exception, will be a trained regular reservist. These units are specially designed to carry out such missions in war as may require great daring and rapidity of movement in attack. In Mussolini's own picturesque words, they will go to war "with a dagger between their teeth, a bomb in either hand, and a royal disregard of danger in their hearts".

To complete the picture of the Italian nation in arms, allusion should be made to the recent laws whereby the entire nation will be subjected to a severe military regime in time of war.\* Public authorities will thereby be enabled to exploit all resources applicable to purposes of war without reserve or restriction. All citizens above the age of 14 years will be compelled to co-operate in tasks of National Defence, and will have to undergo some form of "war training". By a law of January, 1933, state control will be imposed on virtually the entire industrial production of the country. In announcing the final regulations to be imposed on the nation in time of need, it was stated: "The universality of the structure of our regime suppresses all interference, overlapping, bureaucratic difficulties. The technical organization for war proceeds *pari passu* with that of the armed forces, and with that of the spiritual preparation of the new generation under the flag of the Dictator".

Fascism in the meanwhile was greedily assimilating the military philosophy that had been imported from Germany. This process was the easier since the teachings of Clausewitz were based on a profound study of Frederick the Great and of Napoleon, both the incarnation of a form of government ideal for the conduct of war. The new Italian state being cast in a kindred mould, the Clausewitzian theory of war accorded fully with the whole spirit of Fascism. Outwardly militaristic ceremonial was powerfully reinforced by a mental outlook more and more inclining to self-assertive aggression. So the whole attitude of Fascism towards the exterior world seemed to be

---

\* Similar legislation has been passed in most European countries and in the United States, but nowhere has it been more thorough or drastic.

transformed into preparation for an outbreak of hostilities ; training for actual battle became an act of faith of the Fascist creed.

In the army the new doctrine that was then preached is little more than an extended and improved form of the familiar Clausewitzian philosophy : it can be summed up in the phrase of a popular Italian writer as " decisive war " (*la guerra decisiva*). Its main tenets are the following : Strategy and tactics are to be based on a ruthless and headlong offensive, conducted simultaneously on land, at sea, and in the air by all weapons, by all arms, by all services, with all the resources of the state behind them—totalitarian war by the totalitarian state. Above all, there must be no respite for the enemy, no relaxation of effort. Otherwise war will lose its inmost force, while delays may kill the offensive spirit. To that end the whole state must be educated and organized. It is the uttermost embodiment of Clausewitz's Dynamic Law of War.

The army, the infantry in particular, is to be taken as it stands today, or at best as it can be in the very near future ; it is to be organized and equipped on that assumption. There is to be no undue specialization in chemical aids to warfare ; there is not money in Italy for wholesale mechanization. But invention and science are to render every aid towards rendering the existing army as formidable and as mobile as Italian genius and Italian finances permit. The crux of the problem is that the front line on the battlefield must be kept in movement. Everything is to be concentrated to that end, and the infantry will be equipped with cannon and all weapons necessary to keep it in motion, since it is delay, uncertainty, unforeseen obstacles, that hinder victory and paralyze mobile warfare. The Fascist state at war is to be likened to a gigantic wedge, the keen edge of which is the fighting man in battle, the base being the nation at home. Every blow that drives that edge forward to cleave the hostile resistance must come from an impulse applied at the base. The national will to conquer must be instinctive and active in every citizen, young and old, man and woman.

With the Wal Wal incident of December, 1934, Italy turned her thoughts to Abyssinia. A great expedition was prepared and set in motion. For diverse and excellent reasons it was



thought preferable not to tax too far the resources of the regular army, whilst for colonial warfare volunteers might prove more suitable than conscript reservists. The Fascist Militia was thus called upon to supply a large proportion of the troops required. No less than five divisions have been formed entirely of Blackshirt militiamen for service in East Africa, while second line units of the Militia were created to replace at home those going overseas. From the utterances that have attended the despatch of these and other troops to Africa it may be gathered that this great Fascist effort is designed not only to conquer Abyssinia, but also to demonstrate that Fascism will succeed where the old Italy had failed, and that the new Fascist state is destined to attain a position of which the old Italy never dreamed. On the colours of the new Fascist army there is to be inscribed in blood a proud challenge to the world to acknowledge the coming of a new power—the Fascist Empire of the future.

Relying on an overpowering air force and on all “modern appliances”, the Fascist regime has methodically thrust the country on its Abyssinian adventure. Italian soldiers clearly believe that success is attainable, and that the conquest of Abyssinia will be achieved without undue strain on their country. The doctrine of “decisive war” is meant to succeed and to be applied until a definite conclusion is reached—that is, until Abyssinia is Italian. But, one may well ask whether unqualified success is assured. British opinion is doubtful, while many of the most fervent well-wishers of Italy hesitate to believe that the risks and costs of such a difficult war have not been seriously minimized. It may well be that a process of auto-intoxication has been at work amongst the Fascist leaders, and that they in their turn have availed themselves of the entire resources and technique of mass-suggestion and propaganda to flog the national pride into making a great cause out of what the Duce himself once implied is no better than a colonial frontier brawl.

Fascism has done great things for Italy. Its handiwork is witness to the value of many of its conceptions. Its attitude towards many problems, political and social, possesses genuine merit. It has won over admirers from among its opponents both in Italy and in other countries. But by this militarization of the Italian nation, as it is seen today, it has antagonized

many more than ever it converted, even to admitting tolerance of the Fascist creed. The continual allusions to war, the over-proud language and demeanour have caused not a few to wonder whether Italy has not entered into some Mephistophelian compact and bartered her soul in exchange for the pomps and vanities of world power.

If Fascism first came as a national tonic to Italy, has it perhaps not ceased long ago to exert its beneficent effect? The outward militaristic forms have grown too much in importance; its language carries an exaggerated significance. It is reminiscent of those early days in the Japanese army, when the Japanese officer was encouraged to cultivate an air of exterior truculence as a tonic against his lesser stature and lack of self-confidence when dealing with Europeans. Just as the Japanese of those days would assume airs of unnatural ferocity and spit out his words with a hiss, so the Fascist began to indulge in high-falutin' patriotic phraseology. The motive was the same; harmless enough, very human, and so pardonable! But the excellence of the tonic is like that of a potent drug: the habitué may in the end need stronger doses of his medicine to produce the desired reaction.

At first the great deeds of the Fascist Revolution were the theme; very heroic, but very true, very admirable. Next came the glories of Imperial Rome. Now there is the dawn of a Fascist Empire. Is this torrent of self-glorification, this claim to be the Queen of the Eastern Mediterranean, going to stay within neighbourly limits? Who can yet say? One can but fear the danger. For there comes to mind the pre-War bombast of Potsdam: "the mailed fist" of Germany; the Wilhelmine demand for "a place in the sun". And down the dim corridor of history there lingers an echo of the Napoleonic proclamations against a background of victorious trumpets. Are the ambitions of Fascism to lead once more to a climax worthy of Italian grand opera; or will they end as the *νέμεσις* of Greek tragedy?



## THE ELECTION AND THE CRISIS

BY GEORGE GLASGOW

**B**Y the middle of October Mr. Anthony Eden at Geneva was forcing the League's pace from one sanction into another ; and in London his colleagues were precipitating an election, in which the main issue seems likely to be re-armament. The two events were not entirely unconnected.

When the war between Italy and Abyssinia started on October 3rd British popular opinion was roused to such a fever as one seldom remembers. For an analogy one must go back to 1914 and the German attack on Belgium. The Archbishop of Canterbury vied with the Free Churches in so perfervid a denunciation of Italy as to inflame opinion into something like a holy crusade of indignation. The greater part of the British Press resounded with anti-Italian sentiment, and what was more remarkable, with a frankly bellicose devotion to the Covenant of the League of Nations. That large body of politico-religious feeling that derives its inspiration from the League of Nations Union was so muddled in its horror of the Italo-Abyssinian war that it demanded a world war to redress the balance. The Covenant of the League of Nations, apparently ran the argument, was so desirable a safeguard of the peace that it deserved itself to be safeguarded, even at the cost of war. The Labour Party at Brighton by a huge majority voted in favour of "sanctions". The cinemas showed pictures of heroic Abyssinia defending herself against the trained might of Italy. When the face of Signor Mussolini was thrown upon the screen the audience hissed, when the face of the Negus appeared they cheered themselves hoarse.

It is of interest to explore the origins of this welling spring of emotion. The simple fact seems to be that the League of Nations in 1919 took root so deeply in British popular mentality that it has waxed strong ever since. Its ideology has become

wholly divorced from its realism. When the United States refused to become a member of the League, whose very theories depended for their common sense upon American participation, the League was dead except as a quasi-religious aspiration. The machinery it set up for preserving the peace was smashed beyond repair. A sanction must be unquestioned if it is to be effective. If the United States, Great Britain, France, Italy, Russia and Germany in 1931 had been unitedly determined, within the framework of the League of Nations, that no government on earth should engage in war, no government on earth would have engaged in war. Japan by contrast knew that the United States was not a member of the League, and would never take part in any League sanction. She knew that an attempt to apply a sanction against her would involve the sanctionist Powers in war with the United States. She therefore could and did ignore Geneva.

But the circumstances now are a little different. In 1931 British opinion was heroically bent upon escaping financial disaster and a new Government had just been elected for that purpose. The next election was at that time a small speck upon a distant horizon. In the summer of 1935, by contrast, the British Government was faced with the inescapable prospect of an election within a year, and it had just had a striking lesson of what the temper of the country was. During the immediately preceding months a certain questionnaire, known popularly as the Peace Ballot, had been dropped in the letter-boxes of nearly every house in the country. Eleven million people had proclaimed their faith in the League; ten millions had declared in favour of invoking economic sanctions against an aggressor, and nearly seven millions for military sanctions: the net effect of which, if carried into practice, would have been to involve the British Government in war with every non-League country in the world, including the United States; war waged in the ostensible name of peace. But what Government can ignore eleven million votes in an electorate of twenty millions?

Moreover, Mr. Baldwin and his Cabinet had pronounced as the foundation of their foreign policy the doctrine of collective security. They knew that Italy would invade Abyssinia in October, when that policy would be put to the most searching



test. What better opportunity could there be to determine once for all whether collective security, which was the very core of League principle, a doctrine as ardently cherished by the idealists as by the British Government, was a reality or an illusion?

That motive has not been prominent in the declarations of British spokesmen, though it could be read between the lines of their speeches, but it was plainly revealed by Sir Austen Chamberlain, who on this occasion was undoubtedly expressing the view of the Government. Sir Austen's words, spoken in an interview with M. Bertrand de Jouvenal, and published in the *Paris-Soir* on October 15th, were addressed to those Frenchmen who were assailed with doubts about British policy in the present crisis :

"So far as British policy is concerned [he said] these next few weeks will be of capital importance. If the Covenant triumphs, the confidence which we put in it will be strengthened, and Great Britain will have created a precedent which will govern her attitude in other crises to come. If, on the contrary, the other nations . . . fail in this decisive hour to fulfil their engagements, Great Britain will judge herself free of her obligations, and her policy will then be inspired, as before the foundation of the League, by her national interests alone."

While therefore Mr. Eden was allowed at Geneva to continue his loud demand for the vindication of the Covenant at all hazards, the Foreign Office organization at home began to emphasize the collective implication of that same Covenant. The British Government could not act alone. That Government had made such a noise about Italy that the world was filled with genuine misconception on that score. In the middle of it all Sir Samuel Hoare sent a personal message to Signor Mussolini to assure him that Great Britain had no military designs upon Italy. Could there be a clearer commentary on British diplomacy? If Great Britain took any action, economic or military, against Italy, it could only and would only do so as one party in a League of Nations campaign.

That argument began an unedifying series of searchings and manœuvrings at Geneva. The main unconcealed interest of France was to retain Italian friendship with an eye upon Germany; and in particular to maintain the validity of the January understanding with Italy as a result of which France had been able to withdraw her troops from the Franco-Italian frontier

for use on the Franco-German frontier. Yet France was equally desirous of retaining British friendship for a like reason. Never was a Government placed in so disheartening a dilemma as was the French Government in September, 1935, by the combined effect of the impending British election, the Bishops and the League of Nations Union. In that emergency French foreign policy consisted merely in a desperate hope that there would be no Anglo-Italian "incident" in the Mediterranean, such as seemed imminent in the middle of September. Of that danger the British public were kept in ignorance, but British ships were then circling round Italian ships, and for ten whole days there was no diplomatic contact between London and Rome.

Concurrently with the proceedings at Geneva, there passed between London and Paris the sort of diplomatic bargaining that redeems diplomacy from any charge of cynicism and illustrates its abiding puerility. France demanded to know (September 11th) whether the British Government would commit itself to be equally ferocious in the event of an unprovoked aggression being committed against Austria. The British Government cleverly saw an obvious trap, took a fortnight to consider the question, and in its answer said little beyond what Sir Samuel Hoare had said at Geneva on September 11th, namely that "in conformity with its precise and explicit obligations, the League stands, and my country stands with it, for the collective maintenance of the Covenant in its entirety, and particularly for steady and collective resistance to all acts of unprovoked aggression". All that the British Government now added was that it could not specify the application of that formula to any particular contingency that had not yet happened. By a brilliant new formula the British Government discovered that there might be "degrees of culpability" in any hypothetical case of aggression; and who therefore could know what the British Government might decide to do?

Next, a representative of a small Power at Geneva asked Sir Samuel about the famous Covenant "gap". Suppose in the general excitement a small Power was attacked in the interval between Italy's commission of an aggression in Abyssinia and the League's decision to apply sanctions? Would that small Power be "covered"? In other words would Great Britain



and France be committed to go to the defence of that small Power also? Sir Samuel said "yes," though the Covenant itself makes no prescription for such a contingency. He then discovered that his answer had been cleverer than he knew. He asked the French Government if he had been right in giving such an answer to the small Power aforesaid. In its turn the Quai d'Orsay saw the trap. If Paris said "yes" it would automatically be committed to fight for Great Britain in the event of a Mediterranean incident producing an Anglo-Italian war. But the Quai d'Orsay could not say "no", because the Quai d'Orsay had for ten years, though fruitlessly, been asking precisely that question of London. So the answer of the French Government was an emphatic "yes" conditionally on the commitment being "reciprocal"; that is to say, that the British Government would be equally committed in advance to fight for France in the event of any German attack upon France. The shades of Locarno must have turned in their resting place.

Those unedifying exchanges between Paris and London were capped by the concomitant manœuvrings of the other Geneva Powers. The Yugoslavs, who depend for their livelihood upon their trade with Italy, but who are normally obsessed by their diplomatic fear of that country, were put into the position of being invited by the League of Nations to commit economic suicide in order to dissuade Italy from doing something which she, Yugoslavia, was openly delighted that she should do. Austria prepared a case, based upon the principles of the League Covenant itself, for exemption from participation in any economic sanctions that Geneva might decide upon. Switzerland is a permanent "neutral" in all things, and steadily offered objections to economic or military sanctions against Italy. Poland, who was at the moment concentrated upon the diplomatic enterprise of joining a German-Hungarian-Polish *bloc*, had no intention of calling off her trade with Italy.

The complications spread beyond the confines of Geneva. Clearly there would be no sense in Britain gallantly undertaking not to supply Italy with coal and iron if the only effect of such heroic action were the capture of the trade by Germany. Would Germany, who had shown her contempt of the League of Nations by seceding from it, be prepared to forgo an opportunity she

longed for in order merely to help the League of Nations? She toyed with the idea. She would consider the course of negatively supporting the League of Nations by refraining from capturing the trade abandoned by the League States, on condition she was indemnified in cash for the hypothetical "loss" she would thereby incur. Would Mr. Eden engage the British Government's liability to pay reparation to Germany in return for Germany's consent not to pick up the trade thrown down by Great Britain? It came, of course, to the same thing. In short, if the British Government's purpose was to test the reality of collective security, it was succeeding admirably.

Meanwhile, the trend of things at Geneva was feverishly pre-occupying the party strategists in London. By the middle of October it had become clear that the British Government had decided to use the occasion for launching a big scheme of re-armament and for forcing an immediate election on that issue. The argument was simple. Lambeth Palace and Grosvenor Crescent had vied with each other in demanding that League sanctions be applied to Italy. The British Government had taken a leading role at Geneva: but everybody knew that Great Britain was, relatively to other great Powers, disarmed. If Great Britain were so determined to fulfil her covenanted obligations, would it not be wise if she armed herself at least to such a degree of military efficiency as to be able adequately to meet those obligations? The pacifists themselves, with a few signal exceptions, had virtually demanded war. Inasmuch as the Covenant of the League did provide for the application of sanctions against an aggressor, and as the British Government had not only signed the Covenant, but was disposed on this occasion to take a severely juridical view of its signature, it was clearly necessary that the British Government should revise its ideas about its military, naval and air strength. For fifteen years British policy on armaments had been based upon the assumption that the League of Nations would in some degree become a substitute for national armaments. No other Government in Europe had shared that view; and when the Disarmament Conference organized by the League of Nations itself had proved to be a final failure two years ago, the order of the day in every European capital, except London, was to re-arm.



It looks, therefore, as if the chief issue at the impending British election is to be that of British re-armament, driven to an issue by the League of Nations itself. This is not the first time that the League of Nations has produced paradoxical results of such a kind. There can be little doubt that much of Abyssinia's present military strength, and certainly much of the provocation Abyssinia has given to Italy, is the direct result of her membership of the League of Nations. Italy in the past has spent much capital and much engineering skill in Eritrea and Italian Somaliland. She has developed agriculture, communications and buildings. She has tried to cultivate good commercial relations with Abyssinia, to their mutual profit. But the Negus has never welcomed Italian advances. Eritrea has been severely cut off from Italian Somaliland. France could have a railway from Addis Ababa to Jibuti, running through Abyssinian as well as through French territory; but Italy could never obtain her railway through the west of Abyssinia to connect Eritrea with Italian Somaliland. Abyssinia could afford to annoy Italy, because she counted upon British and French support by virtue of the Covenant of the League.

Italy's motive in the Abyssinian war is frankly imperialist. Yet it cannot surprise any honest person that Italian opinion should take the righteous indignation of Great Britain with a pinch of salt. The British Empire happens to be the biggest in the world. At the Lord Mayor's banquet the word imperial or imperialist, when applied of course to the British people, always helps the port to warm the hearts of the audience. When British arms conquered South Africa there was no League of Nations. When Britain took to herself the German South-west African and Eastern African colonies, the League of Nations had not quite started to function. The fact remains that Great Britain possesses the most valuable share of Africa. Italian imperialists point to British imperialism and to its triumphs throughout the world, especially in Africa, where Italy, too, demands a "place in the sun". Are the Italian critics of British honesty entirely wrong when they suspect, not the idealistic but unpractical Mr. Eden but certain of his older political colleagues, of an unavowed, perhaps even subconscious, desire to keep Italy out of the African sun, the more securely to bask in it themselves?

It is notoriously difficult for British opinion to appreciate what "foreigners" think of British conduct. There is a British complex in that matter. It is almost true to say that British opinion is hardly aware of foreign opinion, except as a foil to its own idealism. Probably 90 per cent. of the British people in the present crisis imagine that Mr. Eden at Geneva is marching sublimely at the head of a great international Crusade, himself the heart and soul of it and the rest of them as adoring disciples. The truth is that every country in the world, not excluding the United States, regards this attitude as a typical manifestation of British hypocrisy, and regards British devotion to collective security according to the doctrines of Geneva as a cloak for an imperialism which is trying to organize the League of Nations in its competitive designs. The fact that they are wrong is beside the point that is now being made. British opinion is not only unaware of the impression it makes abroad, but does not even want to know. It is content to know that its own motive is wholly pure; and the amazing thing is that its motive is indeed wholly pure. It is that fact that has constituted the crisis. A paradoxical desire to prove the League effective as an instrument of peace, and to prove it even if need be by war, is the sort of perversion that comes only from a deep sense, of sincerity. It is small wonder that European, Far Eastern and American opinion alike finds it difficult to understand British mentality, and is driven to suspect motives which are not, in fact, operative. But it would help enormously in pursuit of the very objects that British opinion encompasses if that opinion would take the trouble and develop the curiosity to find out what others think. Idealism cannot be pursued if the idealist's eyes be shut to the facts that constitute his problem. Pursued in such a way, idealism of the present pacifist kind manifested in Great Britain inevitably produces the absurd contradiction of war waged for the sake of peace.



## ABYSSINIA AS A COLONIAL ASSET

BY ELIZABETH MONROE

“ *Je risque ma tête.*” So Signor Mussolini, who is a realist, is said to have said to a French friend discussing the East African situation with him in September last. Certainly the stake is high : millions of money from his dwindling resources ; thousands of men despatched to distant, unhealthy bases, without command of the communications linking them with home ; fresh demands on taxpayers whom he admitted to have pressed “ to the limit ” in 1934 ; the draining of his strength over years when he may need it in order to count as a first-class factor in Europe.

The true motive for taking these risks was declared in July, 1935 : “ The essential arguments, absolutely unanswerable, are two : the vital needs of the Italian people and their security in East Africa.” Reduced to its lowest terms, the vital need of Fascist Italy can be summed up in one word—self-sufficiency. This is the answer to those who ask why Italy seeks to produce in Abyssinia the very raw materials with which the world is glutted elsewhere. The self-sufficiency ideal is partly dictated by the Fascist creed, partly enforced by post-war and crisis policy, which has ended the free trade in goods and employment which, as things stand, is vital to Italian prosperity. Since the two chief requirements are population outlets and raw materials, the self-sufficiency problem at once becomes one of expansion. The obvious deduction is that high hopes are being entertained as to the resources of Abyssinia.

A few facts will prove how serious is the population issue. The official estimate for October, 1934, was 42,621,000. This means that the population of Italy has increased by over 25 per cent. since the beginning of the century, and that, deliberately fostered by Fascist policy, which aims at creating riches in man-power, the present average rate of increase is one million

every two and a half years. During the nineteenth century, and up till the world war, the pace was less break-neck, and the problem was solved by emigration; between 1900 and 1913 a yearly average of 670,000 people left Italy, of whom perhaps 40 per cent. stayed in Europe, 60 per cent. went overseas. Post-war legislation checked this flow, particularly the United States quota law of 1921. Making a virtue of necessity, Signor Mussolini declared in 1922 that emigration was an evil. He put an end to the old method of facilitating departure regardless of who went and what happened to them; "emigrants" became "Italians abroad"; they formed part of the national fold, and in 1925 a very sensible set of rules was published for their conduct in foreign countries. The crisis infinitely aggravated matters. Not only did it mean flocks of returning emigrants, but a serious falling off in the remittances sent home by them to Italy, formerly averaging about 2,000 million lire per year. The result was that the home-country was less able to bear not only the returning indigents, but its own ever-growing population.

In the flush of jingoism which invariably accompanies mobilization and the despatch of troopships, Signor Mussolini has promised a home in Africa not only to the surplus families in Italy, but to the nearly ten million Italians living and working abroad: "You will no longer work the ground, no longer grow the fruit, no longer make the roads, no longer build the houses for others. I will give you an Italy beyond the seas." If Abyssinia only is his goal, such a promise is impossible of fulfilment.

Not as misleading, but equally fallacious, is the argument that since in all Africa under European administration there are 360 natives to one white, there is only room for at most 25,000 Italians in Abyssinia. The number may be doubled, or trebled or quadrupled according to the view taken of Fascist driving-power, but even so it is an underestimate. It is based on the premise that the settlement will be of the British type which finds highest expression in Kenya, where the European owns large tracts of land, operates with native labour, and hopes to make his pile and retire to his home country. The Italian colonizer is quite other; even in hot climates he is content



to be a labourer, not an administrator. His standard of living is infinitely lower than that of Northern European workers ; this fact emerges wherever Italian and Nordic workers are juxtaposed, for instance, in the Queensland sugar-cane fields. Above all, he is content to work in harness with the native ; he does so in Eritrea and Libya. The proportion of whites to natives may be 1 to 360 for all European Africa, but it is 1 to 55 in Italy's colonies, in spite of the fact that all three are mainly desert unsuited to white habitation.

The capacity of the Italians for colonization is a known factor, but the capacity of Abyssinia for their accommodation is all conjecture. The stories of its amenities are so conflicting that a reliable estimate is hard to achieve.

The country falls, roughly, into four zones. The first, called in Amharic the *dega*, is all land above 8,000 feet ; that is, above the altitude of Lake Tsana. It includes most of the northern part of the plateau, and is scored by gullies and canyons sometimes 3,000 feet deep, the parts of which lying below the 8,000 foot level are often nearly perpendicular. It also includes the high range just to the south of the Jibuti-Addis Ababa railway. Here the climate is pleasant, with an annual mean temperature of 40 to 60 degrees Fahrenheit, and the European can manage administrative or clerical work. But most travellers agree that any physical exertion brings on a pumping heart, and attacks which recur after a return to the lowlands. Experience of this kind of life in Kenya has proved that even among Europeans who can stand the altitude, there is almost inevitable deterioration in the children, contributed to, of course, by the tropical sun in the rarified atmosphere. The inference is that the Italian, though he could live, could not labour here. This is borne out by the fact that there are only 2,000 Italian settlers in the almost identical and quite extensive highlands of Eritrea. (Though as against this Italians argue that the Eritrean part of the plateau is stony and is in any case in the possession of native families whom Italy would not wish to dispossess.)

The second zone, the *woina dega*, lying between 4,800 and 8,000 feet, is the most suited to European colonization, particularly by Southern Europeans, since its mean annual temperature is between 60 and 68 degrees. This district covers the rest of the

central plateau, mainly its southern part, and the upper basin of the rivers flowing towards the Indian Ocean.

The third zone, the *kolla*, from 2,500 to 4,800 feet, is tropical, comparable in climate to the coffee- and cotton-growing parts of Brazil. Southern European labour is, therefore, still possible, but is trying at the lower levels.

The last zone covers the Danakil, Aussa and Ogaden plains deserts christened by the late Mr. L. M. Nesbitt the "hell-hole of creation," where the tent temperature—the only shade available—is often 156 degrees, where one has to be careful not to fall asleep while resting at midday, "for it is dangerous to slumber in that heat and the constant perspiration," and where the sun beats not only downwards but upwards, rebounding from the earth to afflict the traveller under his brows, his nostrils and his chin. Parts of the area are not unproductive; the Sultanate of Aussa is notoriously rich, and Nesbitt confirms what Plowden wrote of the few prosperous Danakil in the eighteen-fifties, that they tended "the fattest sheep and cows I ever saw out of England." But as land for European settlement, the whole must be counted out. Even in the Juba and Webi Schebeli valleys, where water is plentiful, native labour had to be sought for the banana plantations started by the Duke of the Abruzzi on the Somaliland border, and when it proved impossible to induce the nomad Somalis to settle, recruits were brought in from the Yemen and Hadramuth. One Italian economist advocated resorting to Tamils.

The possibilities of settlement in the first and last zones are limited in the one case, *nil* in the other, but the second and third zones undoubtedly offer scope for development. Judging by the decree-laws of 1932 and 1934 ordering the cultivation of land in Libya "assigned by the State as the property of the colony, carried out by families from Italy", the supply of colonists would be unlimited. The only consideration is the number the land will carry. For lack of a survey, this is hard to assess, but certain facts cannot be questioned. The first is that the Abyssinian hatred of Italians will not be improved by the present campaign; therefore settlement will not be a safe proposition until the country is thoroughly subdued. The French—better soldiers, working in easier conditions, and



nearer home—took twenty-five years to curb Morocco ; in Cyrenaica, where the native population is under 200,000, the Italians took twenty. The action taken in Abyssinia may be more drastic, but the time can hardly be less. Another consideration is that large-scale settlement cannot be undertaken until proper communications are established ; road-building is phenomenally expensive in the highlands—the estimate for a road from Addis Ababa to Lake Tsana in connection with the dam scheme was £2,000 per mile—but is feasible in zones 2 and 3. A third inescapable fact is that until large-scale and costly irrigation works are carried out, these two zones are only cultivable in limited areas. With sufficient funds for this purpose, and with better communications, the present Belgian coffee-growing concessions south of the railway would doubtless have proved more successful. As it is, they are minor, struggling concerns.

Reasoning from these data, a fair estimate seems to be that, given unlimited expenditure and policing by a veritable army, the second and third zones could between them in ten years take a million. But that is a mere nothing in comparison with the population figures already given. At the present rates of increase there will be four million more Italians in Italy than now. Clearly Abyssinia cannot absorb the increase, far less the home surplus of the Italians outside Italy. As an outlet her sole importance is psychological ; the very knowledge that there is new colonial ground to break provides a safety valve through which to let off Fascist steam. The pacification and management of Abyssinia would absorb just those energetic types who, confined at home, lead movements such as are inspiring Germany and Italy to-day.

Psychology apart, the idea that Abyssinia will solve the population problem must be discarded. Whoever first entertained it ignored the fact that tropical settlement has never proved a suitable way of dealing with European surpluses. Germany sought expansion in 1914, but there were before the War only 18,000 Germans in all her colonies, and only 4,000 in a particularly habitable one—German East Africa. Britain, the Netherlands, Belgium, Japan, all faced with the same problem, solved it otherwise, by industrialization of the home country.

Italy has room for the same kind of development, for she is only fifth on the density list :

Belgium	..	..	..	702	per square mile
Netherlands	..	..	..	627	" " "
Great Britain	..	..	..	468	" " "
Germany	..	..	..	372	" " "
Italy	..	..	..	358	" " "
Japan	..	..	..	321	" " "

But such a remedy is not possible without easy access to raw materials, and in these days of tariff barriers and nationalist restrictions, access is coming to mean possession.

Raw materials are the crux of the matter. Italy is relying on gains in Abyssinia to mitigate, in some cases perhaps to cure, her present dependence on the foreigner for over 95 per cent. of her fuel, metals and fibres, and for about 20 per cent. of her foodstuffs.

Animal, vegetable or mineral, the information about Abyssinian resources is extremely scrappy. No one traveller has surveyed the whole, and little can be gathered from locals who, says Marcel Griaule, see "nothing honourable in the land except within the limits of their own districts. The rest of the world is a den of thieves, a dirty set, a mixture of races, a confusion of people who cannot talk of their grandfathers because they have none "

Agriculture and stock-raising are carried on all over the country, but so primitively that it is almost impossible to gauge how much modern methods could yield. The first and highest zone is the only one at which cows and sheep find pasture all the year round, and is, therefore, the only place at which arable and livestock farming are carried on simultaneously. A highlander turns out his cow and ox to graze while he tills, helped out in the shepherding by an inevitable old man who, perched on the nearest small hill, shouts irksome observations in a monotone :

" O . . . Oh ! the cow in calf ! in calf ! in calf ! is going towards the pre-ci-pice ! O . . . Oh ! the grey ox with a star on his fore-head is e-eating the crops ! "

Alongside this scene the farmer grows *tief*, a small grain not unlike millet, which is the staple food of Abyssinia, but the girdle cakes it makes are leathery and sour and rather distasteful



to Europeans. Wheat and barley are little cultivated, but are to be seen growing wild, the former above 7,500 feet, the latter at lower levels. But estimates of production are out of the question until it is known how much of the soil in this zone is, like that round Addis Ababa, only a few inches deep. As far as Italy is concerned, the cereal supply would in any case not be vital, as the necessary grains are cultivable at the lower levels, and as, thanks to the self-sufficiency campaign known as the Battle of the Grain, the Italian peninsula is in good harvest years self-supporting. Its wool, meat and livestock situation is not so satisfactory, and the Abyssinian highlands would probably provide welcome supplies of yarn for the factories of Lombardy and Piedmont and meat for the tinning industry which has been operating in Eritrea since before the Great War.

Suppose a vast outlay on communications and irrigation, the second and third zones are said to be capable of yielding the materials really vital to prosperity, of which the chief is cotton. The second would provide cereals, peaches, grapes and the citrus fruits; the third cotton, sisal, coffee and sugar, with a possibility of rubber. The fourth, except for bananas in the lower Juba and Webi Schebeli valleys, may be discounted as a source of production.

Kenya settlers and Sudan cotton planters, in low water owing to the world crisis, deride these Italian castles in the air. But the Battle of the Grain in Italy has proved that totalitarian states are able to apply themselves to economic development campaigns with an energy and a singleness of purpose which democracies only experience in time of war. Given lavish spending (and as at the present doubtful stage American speculators are already seeking a loophole through which to lend the Duce £20,000,000, there is every reason to suppose that plenty more will be forthcoming if he should conquer Abyssinia), a dictator can undoubtedly make surprising strides towards the self-sufficiency goal. Strategically, the policy may be sound; its economic wisdom is quite another matter.

Since the birth of the legend of King Solomon's mines, stories of the mineral wealth of Abyssinia have been current all over the world. If true, they are important to Italy, for metals,

coal and oil are essential materials for which her industries are almost wholly dependent on foreign sources.

Rumours of oil in Abyssinia are constantly cropping up. A recent example was the Rickett affair and the concession which excited so much attention last August. Certainly there is some oil in the Danakil country. It is also said to have been seen oozing from the ground in the desert district south of the road which runs from Harar to Hargeisha in British Somaliland.

No coal is mined in Abyssinia, and, owing to the inaccessibility of the supposed deposits, no one has seriously considered its possibilities. It is said to be visible in the mountains towards the Sudan frontier, between Lake Tsana and Gallabat. There is soft iron in the same region, and generally in the mountains towards the Takazze river gorge to the north-east of the lake.

Potash, mica, gold and platinum are the only metals commercially developed, but the potash, close to the Eritrean frontier, is the only deposit that is easy of access; it is a comparatively short march from the head of an Italian railway running inland from Mersa Fatima, on the Red Sea coast, whence an Italian company ships the salts in native dhows to Massawa. Platinum is at present the chief mineral asset, the Abyssinian export being about 3 per cent. of the world output. The platiniferous territory lies to the south of the mule-route from Addis Ababa to the British-Sudanese trading station at Gambela, the chief deposits worked being near Gore. The explorer Mr. L. M. Nesbitt also prospected for platinum in the Walega country, some four hundred miles to the west of Addis Ababa.

Much less is known of the gold resources, of which there are signs in the Beni Shangul country, on the Sudan border, and in the tributaries to the north and south of the Blue Nile as it flows west towards the frontier. Alfred Ilg, a phlegmatic Swiss engineer who was adviser to the Emperor Menelik from 1879 until 1906, and who is not prone to exaggeration, writes of "hundreds of natives calmly washing gold dust" out of the Dabus and Didessa rivers, both southern tributaries of the Blue Nile, by the slow and primitive method of rinsing mud again and again on boards slightly hollowed at the centre. He also saw quartz blocks in the river bed in the hollows of which gold had collected during the flood season, from which he assumed



that there were plentiful deposits higher up. According to him, all efforts to start mining operations had failed owing to the fever which at once afflicts both natives and foreigners in the district. The situation seems little changed to-day. There are also tales of gold in the Danakil country, and rumours that fears on the Rand are the reason for South Africa's opposition to Italy. There is little foundation for the first story and still less for the second. Next to nothing is known of the copper and silver which are also said to exist, but sulphur deposits were seen by Nesbitt in the Danakil desert, which also contains "two thousand square miles of salt."

The second essential motive for the present campaign was stated to be the security of the Italian people in East Africa. If security means immunity from planned aggression, conquest and subjugation of Abyssinia renders Eritrea and Somaliland even safer than they were before the Wal Wal incident. If it means the safety of Italian settlers, surely the risks will for years be greater than before in the presence of a conquered but boastful, brave and vengeful native population. If it means the acquisition of a strategic footing in Africa, then Italy will be well-placed. An Italian Abyssinia means a fortress as big as France and over a mile high, dominating on the one side the southern exit to the Red Sea, which is only  $13\frac{1}{2}$  miles wide, and on the other the Nile Valley, with another Italian colony—Libya—across the way.

Abyssinia may present next to no advantages from the population point of view, but as a source of raw materials she is a speculation which a broker would call "interesting." From the standpoint of prestige, psychology and strategy she is a gilt-edged security; success will be not a feather but a flowing plume in the Duce's cap. Why count the cost of succeeding?

## EPITAPH ON GEORGE MOORE

BY CHARLES MORGAN

(Concluded)

### VI

IT will have been noticed that Mr. Ford, in the passage I quoted last month, says that, in reading Moore's books, "you feel, precisely, mental distress". There is, I think, a measure of truth in this, for I experience sometimes, while reading even the masterpieces, a sense of strain, of enforced calm, powerful enough to enable me to understand a deeper unease in others. It would be easy to dismiss such objections as æsthetically irrelevant and the objectors as obtuse. More is to be gained by facing the objection, and enquiring how much of it is critically spurious and how much valid.

What is the element in Moore that causes many readers, who are by no means without equipment to appreciate his mastery of his craft, to shrink from his work? Why has the general public never taken to itself a writer of so much wit, so keen an invention, whose stories, far from being "difficult" or obscure, have a lucidity unparalleled in modern English? A part of the answer, a part that is of no critical importance, may be conveniently summarized in the saying, which I have heard a thousand times, that George Moore was what the English call "French". To speak of a woman as if she were a goddess—that, in England, is pardonable, that is romantic, no matter how the goddess may behave; to speak of her as a doll inseparable from her garments—that, too, is permissible, having polite precedents in Thackeray, *malgré lui*; to speak of her as if she were a square meal is a practice that the heartier English will always approve for what they are pleased to call its "honesty"; but to see her with the eye of a connoisseur—ah, no! that is "French". And Moore saw everything with the eye of a



connoisseur—not women only, but trees. He admired the ilex “because”, he said, “there is an antique beauty in this tree that we find in none other; . . . and if it were possible to carve statues of trees, I am sure that the ilex is the tree sculptors would choose”. For reasons in the same æsthetic kind he admired Doris who was his companion under the ilex. “To justify my desire for her lips I began to compare her beauty with that of a Greek head on a vase, saying that hers was a cameo-like beauty, as dainty as any Tanagra figure.” The passage is not among the writer’s best—a little too solemn, too elaborately orchestrated; and I quote it not in proof of his merit but to suggest what precisely it is in his work that has caused many to turn from it. It is not that it is sensual, but that, where it is sensual at all, its sensuality is felt to be cold. “To justify my desire for her lips”, is among the most damaging phrases of the unregenerate Moore whom I have called Amico Moorini.

“Lovers”, he says elsewhere, “are divided into two kinds: the babbling and the silent. We meet specimens of the silent kind on a Thames back-water—the punt drawn up under the shady bank with the twain lying side by side, their arms about each other all the afternoon. When evening comes and it is time to return home, her fellow gets out the sculls, and they part saying, ‘Well, dear, next Sunday, at the same time’. ‘Yes, at the same time next Sunday’. We were of the babbling kind, as the small part of our conversation that appears in this story shows”. The sterner English gentlemen declare in self-protection that George Moore babbles too much. Susan Mitchell complains that he is “passionless”, and repeats with relish the famous *mot* that Moore was a man who told but did not kiss. Thus are the armies of virtue or disappointment arrayed against him; and at the head of the army is the English lady of polite tradition who, while she by no means objects to a little babbling, is embarrassed to be taken down and turned about as if she were a Greek vase. She fears, perhaps, that beauty accepted in so critical a spirit may too conveniently be returned to its shelf.

There are, indeed, many objections to the passage I have quoted—not the least, or the least surprising, of which is that the writer of it, who would spend a week in search of the precise word, allowed the “fellow” in the punt to use sculls instead of

paddles. It will be a relief to those who feel on whatever ground that Moore was babbling too much to know that, in this instance, the words complained of were written by Amico Moorini, and that George Moore himself condemned them. The skulls, the Greek head and the Tanagra figure have all gone. The whole passage, having survived for more than twenty years, was cut in the eleventh edition of April, 1928.

This idea that Moore's sensual passages have a forbidding chill—is it not to express in different terms another idea: that they were at their best free of sentimentality? He was by no means without sentiment, if by the word we mean a just tenderness and that pity for men and women which springs from perception of the difference between what they are and what they dream themselves to be. *Esther Waters*, his realistic masterpiece, is informed by sentiment of this integrity; but sensuality is its antithesis. To mingle the two is to produce a debased sentimentality, and Moore did not mingle them. But Amico Moorini did, and there we arrive again at the core of the problem.

George Moore, the mature master, when writing independently and at his ease, could be shocking to prudes, but never to discerning and intelligent men; his so-called improprieties had a kind of fabulous simplicity—for example, in the lovely early chapters of *Héloïse's* girlhood—that protects them from attack. It is only when Amico Moorini takes up the pen, as he does sometimes in *A Story-Teller's Holiday* and in detached sentences throughout the novels, that a false sensuality, springing, in most instances, from an adolescent desire to shock, breaks the evenness of the narrative surface. Moore knew well enough that there was within him an immature tendency to this extravagance. To be saved from it, to keep Amico Moorini within the bonds of discipline, he imposed upon himself a rule that is a key to his later style. It was a rule of evenness, a rule against emotional emphasis, a refusal not only of anything that could be called a purple patch but of any conspicuous variation of *tempo* in response to a variation of mood. The result was a classical repose that is delicious among the fevers of contemporary romance. The narrative moves forward like a clear river under a calm sky. The image mirrored in its surface is dissolved



and succeeded by another without perceptible transition ; the light upon it changes its appearance from gaiety to sadness and from sadness to a profound, brooding melancholy ; it responds with exquisite modulations of colour to the day's mood and hour. But it remains a steady, calm, unhurrying river ; nothing, not even passion, is allowed to break its surface except on the unfortunate occasions when Amico Moorini, escaping from his tutor, tosses in a stone.

In this continuous and deliberate calm there is something spellbound and trance-like. Moore's detractors call it monotonous, frozen, dead. To me it is a calm enforced ; I am aware in every line of the exercise of a rigid discipline ; but it is a discipline which, though it touches me sometimes with unease, for I cannot escape knowledge of the struggle that produced it, fills me also with admiration and excitement. Here, plainly, at whatever cost to Moore himself, is something new in English literature, something new that will have a lasting influence precisely because it is not new in the sense of being without roots. It will have a future because it has a past. Three great influences are perceptible in it : the majestic austerity of Landor ; the translucence of Turgenev, whose stories are shaded by none of the mists that trouble other men ; and Pater's doctrine that sensation is the touchstone of value, a doctrine which Moore, having less moral prejudice than the author of *Marius*, was able to accept more fully than Pater himself. Moore made no more secret of these influences than he did of the earlier influence of Flaubert. His claim was that he had assimilated them, and the claim is just. Landor and Pater were not, in essence, novelists ; Turgenev was not an English novelist ; and Moore had evolved a style through which all three were made contributors to the English novel. He called them in as allies against Amico Moorini, and *Héloïse and Abélard* was the result. " There are only two prose epics in the English language," Moore would say. " One is *The Brook Kerith*."

" And what is the other ? " you were expected to ask.

" The other," he would reply, " is *Héloïse and Abélard*."

## VII

There is a passage in which Héloïse questions Abélard on

the subject of the relation between sensuality and love. Nothing he has written reveals Moore as clearly as this dialogue—his eagerness for the concrete, his rejection of transcendentalism in all its forms. Héloïse, alarmed by the detachment of Abélard's admiration for her physical beauty, asks, in effect, whether this is all he cares about. Once he had cared for her mind.

"Dost thou think of me differently now?" she inquires.

How easily an adoring lover might have turned that question aside, but Abélard, with Moore's own frankness, puts himself into his answer.

"Not so differently, Héloïse, that I have forgotten thy soul. But can we think of the soul and body at the same time? When thou comest to me, the lamp held high, to learn all the sports of love from me, thou wilt not think of my soul—not then—but of thy pleasure, as I shall think of mine. Yet let it not be said that the soul and the intellect of the woman is forgotten by the man, though he cannot love body and soul at the same time."

I had a long conversation with Moore on this passage. He said that, if allowances were made for differences of phrase, it represented his own view and certainly his experience. I asked him if Abélard's distinction was not too rigid, if the soul was not to be loved in the body.

"You will be asking me next," he replied, "to affirm the doctrine of Transubstantiation. . . . But tell me," he added, "what do you mean—that the soul may be loved in the body? That is a mystical saying, and mystical sayings have a way of defeating themselves if one examines them a little."

I answered that the emotion of love, if it was to be distinguished at all from desire, was to be distinguished first as a particular emotion, directed towards the one person beloved, whereas desire was a general emotion requiring only the stimulus of physical beauty. Yet desire itself was particularized by love and directed by it towards the loved one, not because she was more beautiful than others, but because herself was manifest in her body.

Moore said: "Think of the eyes. Do you say that the soul appears in the eyes? If so, it must disappear when the eyes are shut. Perhaps you are right, but we shall not decide

by argument whether you are right or wrong. Nothing can decide except the scene itself. Imagine the scene and your pen will write down the answer. Perhaps Abélard would have decided in your favour. If when Héloïse came to him carrying the lamp, her eyes had been shut, he would have said : ‘ Héloïse, open your eyes,’ and have looked into them, searching for her. At any rate,” he added, “ Abélard would have done so, if he had thought of it, whatever his views about the body and the soul, for nothing would have so delighted Héloïse. She would have asked what he was looking for, and if he had answered : ‘ For thy soul !’ the earlier conversation would have been reversed. She would have said : ‘ Is there naught but my soul ?’ and they would have begun to argue fruitlessly as people always do whenever the soul is mentioned. But soon,” he added, “ they would have grown tired of conversation.”

## VIII

“ They would have begun to argue fruitlessly as people always do whenever the soul is mentioned,” Moore said—a saying remarkable in the man who wrote continually on religious themes, who made a pilgrimage to Palestine that he might prepare himself for *The Brook Kerith*, and who loved Shelley above all poets.

Susan Mitchell, whose book is perceptive of his worldliness but in other respects is shut in by a provincial blindness, says roundly that Moore was “ unspiritual.” It is a perilous word to fling at a great artist. No man is unspiritual who is fanatically dedicated, as Moore was, to an unmaterial end—to the pursuit of an abstract perfection ; and no man is unspiritual who could write *The Brook Kerith* and *The Passing of the Essenes*. But it is significant that for him Paul was the hero of the New Testament ; that of all Shelley’s poems it was *The Sensitive Plant* that fascinated him in his childhood and commanded his loyalty in his old age ; and that argument concerning the soul appeared to him fruitless.

There are here seeming contradictions that cannot be reconciled except by saying, what I am sure is true, that no man with so great an interest in certain aspects of religion has ever been so little metaphysical. This was his limitation, but it was his genius



to turn his limitations to account, and the fact that he was un-metaphysical, that he was indeed incapacitated, not by intellectual failure but by irresistible boredom from abstract speculation, became in him a source of strength.

There is an anthology of his choosing called *Pure Poetry*, a rare volume and an illuminating one. In the preface he tells how in his youth he was bored by *Marmion*, how between the ages of fifteen and twenty-one he read most of the English poets ; "and when I was twenty-five," he adds, "my love of poetry began to wilt in *Les Orientales*, *Les Feuilles d'Automne*, *Les Contemplations* ; and *La Légende des Siècles* carried with it the dismal conviction that I had lost my taste for poetry. Something has broken in me, I said ; can it be else, for here is beautiful poetry and I can distinguish in it no more than sonorous versification." Then he reaches his climax. "Balzac opened a new world for me, a world of things, and in Balzac I found a poem so beautiful that I began to think that perhaps my love of poetry was not as dead as I thought it was." And after speaking of Gautier and Villon and Belleau, he says : "And the reason may be stated why we are in these poems at the heart of poetry : because these poems were born of admiration of the only permanent world, the world of things" ; and he proceeds to argue that "ideas, thoughts, reflections, become common quickly ; an idea is mine to-day, yours to-morrow, and the day after to-morrow is on the barrel organs. Every ten years", he adds, "morality, patriotism, duty and religion, take on meanings different from those they wore before".

The argument is fallacious, for while it is true that moral ideas change and are, therefore, less enduring subjects of poetry than the moon and stars, it is wrong to suppose, as Moore seemingly did in this instance, that all ideas are didactic or that religion consists in morals. "Pure poetry" for Moore was the poetry of concrete things, knowledge of which is received directly through the senses. I do not wish here to criticize his anthology. It is enough to point out that six poems of Edgar Allan Poe's are included in it, and not one by any seventeenth-century mystic, unless Milton's *Sweet Echo* and *On May Morning* or Marvell's *Nymph Complaining* may by some miracle be allowed to represent them. What emerges

is that Moore did not know that such a line as : " I saw Eternity the other night " was poetry. For him poetry was about enduring things and sensations. To see eternity was not to see with the same eyes that saw William Morris's

" Gold wings across the sea !  
Grey light from tree to tree,  
Gold hair beside my knee "

and, therefore, to see eternity was not to see at all. In any case, eternity itself was not a thing and so not " permanent " enough to be a subject of " pure poetry ".

Happily it was only Amico Moorini who tried to write verses, and he desisted about the same time that he threw his charcoal away, leaving George Moore, with his unfailing intuition, to apply his poetic theory in the one practice where it could at that time be usefully applied : the practice of naturalistic story-telling. If Moore had had a speculative mind, he could not have written *A Mummer's Wife* or *Esther Waters*. If he had had mystical apprehension, he would not have written *The Brook Kerith*. But he was not unspiritual ; he had many of the qualities of a saint, though not of a saint adhering to any Church. He was at first a naturalist of the French naturalistic school ; then a realist whose realism was strengthened and intensified, on the earthly plane, by the fact that it did not strive to penetrate beyond that aspect of things which lies within reach of the sensuous, as distinct from the apprehensive, intellect ; but he was very far from being a materialist as man or as artist.

## IX

His critics are fond of saying that, if Moore lives, he will live by his style. He himself was a little weary of being praised for his style. " Style ? " he said. " They haven't read Landor ", and, though this was probably no more than an expression of the desire, which every writer has, to be praised for some quality the praises of which have not grown stale, it is worth recording that Moore's especial pride was in his power to invent anecdote. He was aware that his later narrative method was made perilous by its smoothness ; at the same time he was determined that this smoothness must at all costs be preserved, for, if it were not, his whole purpose would be defeated, Amico Moorini

would be given a chance to intrude his extravagances, and an element of fashion would appear in his prose. To be fashionable was what Moore did not desire, for to be fashionable to-day is to be unfashionable to-morrow, and his aim was to write a prose independent of every colloquialism, every trick of phrase, every contemporary allusion that might make it obscure or tedious in the future. He carried this quest of an absolute prose so far that he rejected where he could, and sought occasion to reject, the use of the second person plural, feeling that this use of verb and pronoun was rubbed, and that "thou" and "thee" and "thine" had the double merit of freshness to-day and of an unshakable establishment in the Bible.

But he knew that this smoothness laid a weight on narrative; after many pages the reader might turn from it, seeking stronger contrast, richer variety, more abundant vigour than was to be found in these intertwining cadences, unless by anecdote he was led on from page to page. He had been greatly troubled, while writing *Héloïse and Abélard*, by the necessity, which he had seen no means to avoid, of discussing Nominalism and Realism, and he would tell me often of the pride he had had in inventing anecdotes which should sustain the narrative beneath the burden of so much philosophy. To him his anecdotes were windows in the corridor of narrative and exposition. They were the light by which the journey was to be made; and to think of his style as if it consisted only in a faultless control of phrase and cadence is to deny him his place in literature. Good English, however good it may be, will gain no man immortality, and we shall arrive at the significance of Moore only by recognizing the validity of his claim to be a master of anecdote and by perceiving to what conclusion it leads us. The conclusion is, I think, that Moore desired above all else to evolve a new method of story-telling. He used to say that he had introduced "the æsthetic novel" into England. This is true, but the phrase was not fortunately chosen; it expresses only a part of the truth and, at the same time, obscures it, for to many minds the word "æsthetic" suggests the beauty of contrivance, not that perfect marriage of form with purpose which was Moore's understanding of it. He saw round him, and might still see if he were alive, the English novel struggling beneath



a burden of literary convention. The uses of dialogue, the means employed to pass from dialogue to narrative and back again, the methods of communicating retrospect, had all stiffened. In the work of unskilled writers, each transition was a jerk, and, even though by skill and experience the jerks might be concealed, one remained aware that the narrative planes were being shifted; there was a momentary break of illusion when the author ended his trickle of dialogue, to which the reader had been listening as one mortal listens to another, and plunged into the thought-stream which a reader cannot enter except on the basis of his being an omniscient god.

This passing from plane to plane is one of the everlasting difficulties of a novelist. A thousand different ways of avoiding it have been invented. The whole story may be told in the first person, thus excluding the novelist's voice altogether and forcing the reader to identify himself with the imagined narrator. Or the story may be told in the third person, but still consistently from the point of view of one character in it—a method subject to many of the limitations of first-person narrative and lacking its intimacy, but free also of its egoism. Or there is another method, chosen by many writers in recent years—that of avoiding emphasis on major transitions by multiplying minor transitions. The reader is carried forward at so high a speed over so rough a track that he has no time to notice the changes of plane from subjective to objective narrative. Of this method there have been brilliant instances, particularly in America. Mr. William Faulkner's sentences have the crackle and vitality of machine-gun fire: his changes of narrative plane are so many, so swift, so violent that, by breaking continuity into a thousand pieces, he achieves a coherent pattern. But successful though it may be in short stories, this method is perilous in its application to epic narrative. Either the noise becomes deafening and the reader intuitively closes his ears against it; or, in authors whose irregularity of style is quieter, there is a gradual failure of lucidity, the reader searching in vain for the bread of plain statement among the high and mixed flavours of impressionism. It is not necessary to multiply instances of the attempts that have been made to give unity to fictitious narrative; the point is that, until Moore's coming, they were literary experiments

based upon elaborate investigation of the written word.

From this Moore broke free. He had an extraordinary capacity for observing the simple truths that other men pass by. He had the kind of intelligence that might have invented adhesive postage-stamps or, in a yet more ancient world, have prompted him to exclaim to the men who were dragging a sledge: "Why not put the thing on wheels?" And he observed, in his study of narrative, that when one reads it in a book one is much more acutely conscious of its transitions, its interpolated retrospects, its struggling movements from one consciousness to another than one is in listening to a story that is told orally. A child always prefers a good tale invented at its bedside to a tale, greatly superior in order and substance, that is read from a book; and Moore had the genius to perceive that the modern English novel, even the naturalistic novel that he formerly practised, had become too far removed from its origin in fables passed down by word of mouth. A lesser man, making this discovery, might have been tempted by it into banal simplicities and an insane, retrogressive abandonment of tradition. Moore set himself to apply the virtues of oral narrative to the rich and complex language he had inherited from the past. The results are most conspicuous in those parts of his style—we may call them mannerisms if we will—that caricaturists love to reproduce.

And thinking that William must by now have boiled the egg, have you boiled the egg? he cried, but no answer came through the open door. William has forgotten the egg! and he fell to thinking of his hunger that would not now be satisfied, and of the long journey he had made from Lough Carra that day—a journey that seemed to have had no other purpose than that he should enjoy the egg William was to have prepared for him.

That is a deliberately crude caricature. It illustrates Moore's love of repetition, particularly of proper names; his insistence on some material thing that the narrator wishes to keep in the listener's mind; his sliding transitions from speech to thought, and from thought of present hunger to retrospective thought of the journey. It exhibits his familiar devices—for example, his abrupt ending of a cadence on an open monosyllable: "and of the long journey he had made from Lough Carra that *day*—a journey that seemed . . ." One can hear the narrator's voice rise on "day" and fall naturally as the story continues.

All these mannerisms are the mannerisms of speech—ridiculous

in the passage I have invented but giving to Moore's own narrative a disciplined fluency that belongs to a new voice in literature. Consider first his treatment of dialogue and the means he discovered to preserve at once an impression of natural speech and the continuity of a prose that would have been broken by photographic naturalism. Abélard has been likening the whiteness of Héloïse to the whiteness of summer :

But my summer is not yet come, Abélard, she said ; I am but the month of April. Call me not the month of March, for this is a cold month, and I am not cold. A fair month, indeed, he answered, is the month of April, one not to be despised, though the month of May is a better month, and the month of June is—well, June is a month for the Gods. But thy June, Héloïse, is many months distant, and waiting for it shall be my joy. Wilt grow tired of waiting ? she asked. Tired of waiting ? How little thou knowest yet about love. A true love never tires or wanes, Héloïse, but is with us always, like our blood, like our breath.

In this passage there are seven sentences. Each sentence, without exception, hands on a key-word to be repeated in its successor, precisely as each stanza of *terza rima* hands on a rhyme. The first sentence lays an emphasis on "month". The second repeats it twice, and produces an internal echo by a double use of the word "cold". The third sentence has the word "month" no less than six times, and another internal echo on the word "June". The fourth sentence repeats "June", and introduces a new word, "waiting", with a final muffled echo of "month". The fifth sentence repeats "waiting"; the sixth echoes it interrogatively, and strikes the new word "love", to which the last sentence instantly replies. By this means was Moore's dialogue bound together, his repetitions and his vowel-sounds linking his prose as rhyme links a sonnet. The significance of Moore's prose escapes us unless we observe that the purpose of such elaboration was not decorative but structural. He was not making pleasant sounds because they pleased his ear ; he was binding dialogue, as an architect binds into unity the component parts of his design.

## X

I have discussed his style in detail, sacrificing with reluctance an analysis of his work's content, because to analyse even a chapter of *Hail and Farewell* would have been to let loose all



the fiercest tongues in Ireland, and to touch *The Brook Kerith* is to be plunged in controversy artistically irrelevant. I wanted to show how Moore subdued Amico Moorini ; how he taught himself to be a writer and what kind of writer he taught himself to be ; and in what sense it is true to say that he gave liberty as well as discipline to the English novel. Great though his influence has already been upon a few writers whose struggle with the difficulties of their craft has opened their eyes to his achievement, his full power lies, I believe, in the future, when the personal controversies that surround his name are dead and the world has had time to rediscover, as it will unless story-telling die, that lucidity is a virtue. Then it will be understood what were the services to art of this man whose house in Ebury Street is now become a shop. In that room, in that house, another friend and I saw him for the last time. It was a winter's morning. A light blind was across the window ; the dining-table had been moved ; George Moore lay in the middle of the room under the blaze of an electric chandelier. He spoke first of his illness and suffering, a subject of conversation rare in him. Then, rousing himself, he said with an exaltation yet more rare : " Now let us turn from things of the flesh and talk of things of the spirit," and he began to tell us of the book he was then writing and hoped to finish, *A Communication to My Friends*. Humour, irony, indignation, anecdote, poured from him. We were his guests ; he exhausted himself to entertain and hold us, having then—as always, except when Amico Moorini showed his head—an ancient and elaborate courtesy.

When it was time to leave him and we stood at the door, he cried out : " Come again ! Come separately or come together—but come. All day I lie here alone. All day alone." He was lonely, but reconciled to loneliness by long use and a fanatical desire for independence. He was a single-minded artist, and no one who is that can be altogether unhappy or without armour. His aim, and his achievement, was a constructive simplification of prose narrative. " Ingres and Antiquity ", he said, " alone knew how to simplify ", and it may well serve as his epitaph that, by infinite labour, he taught himself their lesson and applied it to the English novel.

## A SECOND TERM FOR ROOSEVELT ?

BY FRANK DARVALL

THE New Deal has been completed at last. After three Congressional sessions of unprecedented activity President Roosevelt has at length promised a breathless and puzzled America a breathing space.

Even New Deal supporters, whose number and enthusiasm is declining, would admit that the present state of Washington is a very sorry one. Seldom if ever, in time of peace, has that city, or the administration as a whole, presented such a scene of chaos and uncertainty. The clear purpose by which some of the President's advisers, though never a majority, were actuated two years ago, and the confident crusading temper which characterized most of them during the hectic early days of the Roosevelt term, have given place to doubt and anxiety. Their plethora of measures, which seem to many a too hastily improvised assortment of inconsistencies, though undoubtedly on balance productive of much good, have fallen far short of attaining their real objects: adequate recovery, permanent reform, and the entrenchment of Mr. Roosevelt and his machine in power. The time has clearly been reached when its sponsors as well as the country should take stock of the New Deal as a whole, in order to determine how much of it has succeeded, how much failed, how much it has accomplished, how much remains to be done.

Even if it were not so, the rising tide of opposition is such as to render advisable a strategic retreat of the Roosevelt forces to prepared bases from which, when their ranks have been re-formed, and their strategy and tactics brought into line with the new situation, they can advance again.

The Supreme Court, which was such an anxiety to the administration during its last session, is likely in its coming

session to be a source of even greater anxiety. Amongst the many measures whose constitutionality it will have to determine, as cases from interior Federal Courts are brought up to it, are the Agricultural Adjustment Act, the Tennessee Valley Authority Act, the Guffey Coal Act, the power of the Public Works Administrator to use his funds freely for the purpose of constructing, or stimulating the construction of, cheap housing, and others. Were decisions similar to the notorious N.R.A. one to be handed down, the New Deal would indeed collapse in chaos, and, what is worse, leave behind it a grave emergency (which the collapse of the ill-fated, and little lamented, N.R.A. did not).

It appears improbable that such a catastrophe will occur. The Supreme Court is a cautious body. It is extremely likely, if it believes any measure to be sincerely popular with the country, and if it thinks that its legal condemnation would be productive of grave public danger, to do what it did in the "gold clause" case, strain every nerve to find some respectable legal reason for not upsetting in practice a policy on which the country has come to depend.

Even so, Mr. Roosevelt cannot but be worried. It is possible that he may find such a major item in his programme as the Agricultural Adjustment Administration destroyed, or gravely embarrassed, by an early decision of these nine arbiters of America's legal destiny. It is probable that he may find some other measures, such as the Guffey Coal Act (which, creates a sort of miniature N.R.A. in that one industry), which if not vital, are at any rate important to him, vetoed by the Court. It is therefore very difficult for him to do anything but mark time until the Court has, by legally condemning or sustaining what he has done, determined what he may do.

The opposition other than legal, which the New Deal is now meeting, is also such as to render advisable a pause in the Roosevelt programme. Very evidently much of the New Deal is now, whether justly or unjustly, under fire. A continuation on the old lines would be, therefore, extremely unwise from every point of view, and not least the electoral one. It is clearly the time now to stand aside a little from the spate of measures, so that their effects, and the public response to them, may be



accurately determined. Thereafter the next advance can be made with more certainty, so as to command more hope of success, actual and electoral.

The recent war crisis adds to the arguments in favour of an internal breathing space. It is the universal American desire that the United States shall not be involved in foreign hostilities, wherever and whatever they may be. It is also a very general American desire that, if such an object can be achieved without risk of American participation in foreign conflicts, and without loss of a free hand, the weight of the United States should be effectively cast in the international scales on the side of peace. It is by no means easy for the United States to achieve these objects, or for the President to pursue them without antagonizing important sections of his public, and even party. Already the line of emphasizing American neutral duties rather than rights has been criticized on two sides by people like would-be shippers to Italy, who think that it goes too far, and by others like former Secretary of State Stimson and other keen supporters of the Pact of Paris, who do not think it goes far enough. It is therefore advisable for the President, compelled to watch closely a continually changing and always anxious foreign situation, and to pick his steps in relation to it with the greatest care, to free himself as much as possible from the strain of a controversial, energetic, internal policy.

Even if there were none of these reasons for an internal breathing space, and for a temporary halting of the New Deal, it is probable that Mr. Roosevelt's decision would be the same, because from many points of view his present term of office may be regarded as already over. He has fifteen further months in the White House, it is true, whether or not he is re-elected, but he cannot be expected to fill them with important new measures. The election campaign is too near, and too absorbing for that.

Primary elections are only a few months off. The nominating conventions themselves, which adopt party platforms as well as candidates, are hardly more than six months away. Feverish activity in preparation for them has already begun. Despite all his denials, Mr. Roosevelt's present western and southern tour is widely, and probably correctly, regarded as a first shot

in the campaign, or at the very least as a final survey of the ground before active commencement of the campaign.

The next session of Congress, the fourth and last of Mr. Roosevelt's present term, which will convene in January, will be concerned almost wholly with campaign considerations. It will be impossible to get it, or the country, to look at proposals from anything but an electoral point of view. It would therefore be folly to present it with controversial new proposals, except in so far as they were intended as shots in the campaign. A further "Deal", if one is intended, would be far better held in reserve for use in the elections or after them, than wasted on the controversial final months of an expiring Congress and administration. This is therefore an excellent moment at which to examine the American political situation. It is the parting of the ways between one political period and another, as was the winter of 1931-32, when the Hoover administration was turning its attention from the tasks of the moment to the urgent, and as it proved, impossible, task of getting re-elected.

Mr. Roosevelt himself, as a man and as a President, is still popular, though no longer so widely and wildly so as during his first year in the White House. His cheerfulness and charm, his courage, his energy, his good intentions, his receptiveness to new ideas, his political adroitness, are widely recognized. If his understanding of fundamental, political, and economic problems, and his statesmanship, are beginning to be doubted and he is to be written down as a brilliant and likeable but rash politician, that has not yet affected the belief of a majority of his countrymen and women that, even so, he is the equal of most of his predecessors, and infinitely superior to most of his competitors.

That, indeed, is his greatest asset. Who is there to oppose him, whether in his own party or in another? Former Governor Al Smith, former Governor Albert Ritchie, former Secretary of War Newton Baker, former Secretary of the Treasury Carter Glass, Senator Harry Byrd, Mr. Owen D. Young, and other leading Democrats, though each possessing a very loyal following, are none of them today formidable competitors to Mr. Roosevelt in the public eye. What is more, each knows that, however personally popular or politically influential he may be, only a

miracle could win him the Democratic nomination, the tradition of renominating the sitting President and the patronage at the disposal of Mr. Roosevelt being as they are. None, therefore, is one half as active as he was four years ago, when the odds were even as between all comers, or as is Mr. Roosevelt today.

Only Senator Huey D. Long was seriously setting himself up as a rival to Mr. Roosevelt for the Democratic nomination, and even he had no real expectation of winning it, only of embarrassing Mr. Roosevelt, and of preparing the ground for an independent candidature, which would perhaps enhance his chances in 1940, when his real attempt on the Presidency was planned. The Long campaign was taken seriously, much more seriously than I personally think it deserved to be, before the Senator's violent end, so much so that the latter, though the manner of it was deplored, was widely felt to be a blessing. Mr. Roosevelt undoubtedly breathes a great deal more freely now that the Dictator of Louisiana is no more. For there is no obvious successor to him, no one to organize effectively the "Share Our Wealth" society, no one to capture the imagination of the public, no one to combine a personal political machine with leadership of the great army of the discontented. The danger that a third party candidate would win three or four states in the usually "solid South", and would besides turn the balance against the Democrats in as many more in other parts of the country, thus letting the Republican slip into the Presidency because of the division of the opposing forces, seems to have abated. But even Huey Long, in the days when he seemed Mr. Roosevelt's greatest menace, was not the sort of competitor to diminish the President's popularity and prestige in the country generally. On the contrary, it was and is the thought that such as he are Mr. Roosevelt's greatest menace which causes the Roosevelt popularity and prestige to ebb less rapidly than it otherwise would. Millions of Americans, if there were within the Democratic party any alternative leader who could be compared with Mr. Roosevelt, and who possessed a reasonable political availability, might begin to wonder whether Mr. Roosevelt was more than an average President. But with no one of any eminence politically available there is no one to cast Mr. Roosevelt into the shade.



Even in the other parties there is no one apparently who is politically available who is likely to command more confidence than Mr. Roosevelt. Mr. Hoover, Mr. Ogden Mills, Colonel Knox, Representative Wadsworth, Colonel Theodore Roosevelt, Senator Vandenberg, Senator Dickinson, Governor Landon of Kansas, Governor Winant of New Hampshire, and other potential or actual candidates for the Republican nomination, though some of them able, and some popular, are none of them persons calculated to make Mr. Roosevelt look small—quite the contrary.

Of the possible nominees of minor parties, now that Huey Long is gone, there seems to be no one of national stature. Father Coughlin could not in any case be a candidate himself. Even if he were available, he would, if compared with Mr. Roosevelt, make the latter look greater, not smaller; better, not less, well fitted to fill his high office. In any case his influence seems to be, at least temporarily, waning, and he has shown signs, perhaps in consequence, of coming again on to the Roosevelt "band-waggon" for the purposes of the election. Upton Sinclair, Dr. Townsend, Senator Robert La Follette (the younger), Governor Olsen of Minnesota, Governor Talmadge of Georgia, and even Norman Thomas (regular official Socialist nominee), and Senator Borah (most irregular of regular Republicans), though each possessed of a loyal following, and some possessed of a national reputation, are none of them likely to hurt Mr. Roosevelt if compared with him or put in the lists against him.

The tendency to swing away from Mr. Roosevelt is therefore continually checked. Even bitter opponents of his policy who write him down as merely a clever politician, when they come to think of the available alternatives (politically as distinct from theoretically available, and the distinction is important in America), are often compelled to say that Mr. Roosevelt is a not an unworthy occupant of the White House.

It is much the same when the President's policy as distinct from his personality is considered. The New Deal has always been less popular than Mr. Roosevelt, who has very luckily, but rather improperly, been given the credit for its good points and successes, while being absolved, until recently, of full

responsibility for its defects and failures. It is today distinctly discredited. Even so, however, it might very possibly receive the endorsement of the country at the polls on the ground that no one had, and no one has, anything better to suggest.

The New Deal has grown more and more unpopular in many circles of opinion for several reasons. Recovery has lagged, and the public always expects, and is too frequently led to expect, rapid and complete recovery, and is therefore inclined to discount anything else. Emboldened by the growing evidence that success, as measured by recovery, has been only partial, Radicals and Conservatives, who in any case were discontented with the New Deal, have been criticizing it from their respective points of view. The Radicals have a hundred schemes, of which Huey Long's "Share Our Wealth" programme was only one of the best known but by no means the most practical which they would like to try in the belief that a short cut out of the depression and towards prosperity and justice exists. The Conservatives, now that their courage has returned, are obsessed with the danger of such huge Government deficits and expenditures, and irritated beyond measure at other innovations, and are therefore clamouring for a return to normal.

Other people, inclined to be less impatient than the Left and less frightened and orthodox than the Right, have gradually been turned from support to criticism of the New Deal because of the way it has seemed recently to be running down and falling into confusion. Others again have become critics either because they disliked its regulatory features (the typical American is still, so far as his own affairs are concerned, and apart from a receptiveness to government loans or gifts, a determined individualist) or because they thought, especially after the N.R.A. decision, that it was contrary to their still widely venerated constitution.

Most powerful of all in producing a reaction against the New Deal has been, paradoxically enough, its success. Only a grave emergency, when fear made everyone willing to trust the one man who seemed confident, could have enabled Mr. Roosevelt to carry into law and effect such a programme or series of programmes as the New Deal. Such a subordination of Congress and public to one man and policy was bound to produce a

reaction in time. Now that the crisis is over, or at least relaxed, that reaction has come. Normal political and party considerations are now again uppermost. And therefore, as is usual in America, quite apart from the merits or demerits of the President and programme in question, jealousies between executive, legislative and judiciary, between the federal State and local governments, between the political parties, and between groups and personalities within each party, have developed, and have swollen the tide of criticism against the New Deal.

Even so it is, I think, the case that a 60 per cent. majority of the American people, if they had to vote on the questions: "Do you think that the New Deal taken as a whole has contributed effectively to the recovery and reform of the country"? and "Do you think that the New Deal taken as a whole should be maintained or repealed"? would vote "Yes", and thus sustain the President. Most voters would probably prefer to be allowed to pick and choose, to take some and to reject other parts of the New Deal. The way in which advocates of the New Deal as a whole are critics of it is very marked, and strong critics: in detail, while fierce critics of the programme as a whole would, if asked plank by plank whether they would sacrifice it, frequently say "No". On balance, however, and realizing that they had to take the rough with the smooth, the 60 per cent. majority which I have mentioned would almost certainly even today, as "straw" votes have shown, be unprepared to negative this great experiment.

This is so, I think, very largely for the same reasons that an even greater majority of the American people would be inclined to say that they approved of the President as a man, because of the paucity of available alternatives. What could the United States have done, what could it do today, in the emergency with which it is faced, if it were to decide to reject either the President or his programme?

It is highly probable, even if an opponent of Mr. Roosevelt, whether Republican or right-wing Democrat, were to be elected, that a great deal of Mr. Roosevelt's policy would have to be retained. Not even the most orthodox of statesmen would probably dare to cut down relief and other emergency expenditures, or to impose taxation to the point which would be necessary



if a balanced budget were to be immediately attained. None would dare to leave the farmers, the unemployed, the debtor classes, and other distressed elements, to their fate by having the federal government retreat, as in strict American theory it should, into its normal sphere of activity.

Certainly the public has not yet been given by any of Mr. Roosevelt's many critics or competitors a coherent, complete programme, or even the indications of one, which can command real confidence as a practicable alternative, the political and economic circumstances being what they are, to Mr. Roosevelt's series of experiments. The New Deal, considered absolutely, may be very vulnerable to criticism. Considered, as it should be, in relation to the American situation, and to the alternatives which were, or are, actually possible, it appears much stronger.

That is not to say that either the President or his programme will actually emerge safe from next year's elections. It seems highly probable that the President will be re-nominated and re-elected. There is, however, undoubtedly a chance, if recovery lags, if the radicals nominate a third party candidate who can poll a respectable vote, and if the Republicans play their cards well, that he may just fail to get an electoral majority. If only the Republican Party could today present as firm a front as it did in 1920, it is possible that it could win, as it won then, on a plea for a return to normalcy. It might not hurt it in such circumstances to present as its nominee a respectable dark horse. At the moment, however—and this is Mr. Roosevelt's greatest asset—both the Republican and the radical opposition is divided as seldom before. It even looks as if only a miracle would enable either Republicans or Radicals to enter the campaign with a united front, or in a temper which offers real hope of victory.

The re-election of Mr. Roosevelt seems therefore highly probable. The retention of his policy is perhaps less probable. He may, indeed, not be sorry to see the Supreme Court, Congress, the turn of the elections, and other factors, give him an excuse for dropping much of his former programme. There are more unlikely things than that his second term, if he be re-elected, should be, at least by comparison with his first, and so far as

domestic matters are concerned, uneventful, and even conservative.

It is, of course, too early to say that this will be so. Many things may happen between now and the commencement of the next Presidential term at the end of January, 1937. The progress of events may be such as to drive Mr. Roosevelt, who is, whatever else he may or may not be, most certainly a brilliant opportunist, into courses which neither he nor anyone else would previously have anticipated. It is, indeed, this feeling that anything is possible which has seemed the distinguishing characteristic of Mr. Roosevelt's presidency, and it may remain so.

Even the issues of the election, in so far as there can be any others than a weighing in the balance of Mr. Roosevelt and his New Deal, are as yet doubtful. There has seemed much reason to suppose that the revision of the Constitution might be the chief issue. The Republicans certainly have looked as if they wanted to make it such. Mr. Roosevelt has talked at times as if he would gladly take up such a challenge. But not until after this session of the Court has concluded its work, or until both sides have discovered what they can of public sentiment on the point, will even that matter be definitely settled. For the moment foreign observers would do well to do what Mr. Roosevelt invites Americans to do: enjoy a welcome and overdue breathing space so far as American domestic developments are concerned.

## ENGLISH LECTURERS IN AMERICA: II

BY S. K. RATCLIFFE

CONCERNING the circumstances and possibilities of the American platform there exist on this side of the Atlantic a surprising number of mistaken notions which ought to be blown away. In the October number of this REVIEW I dealt mainly with the past, and with the experiences of English authors and public men who toured the United States under conditions markedly different from those prevailing today. It should therefore be serviceable, and it may not be without entertainment, if in the present article I set forth some of the actualities of a business which is much more important than most people realize in relation to the great matter of Anglo-American understanding and misunderstanding. And let me begin with a warning that ought not to be needed. Generalities on a topic of this kind are not interesting, and they have no value at all. Here is a subject which calls for exact statement, and for a certain amount of frank criticism.

The Briton or European who wishes, in Henry James's phrase, to "commence *conférencier*", stands in need of an agent. Bookings cannot be made across the ocean. Programmes are arranged months in advance, and the task of fixing dates and arranging journeys involves a large amount of effort with innumerable adjustments. The records of the past thirty years prove that the lecture-bureau business is highly speculative. An agent in New York or Chicago who has to do with clients in Europe is in peril of many chances. He may have "plunged" over one or two "head-liners"; he may have miscalculated the demand for a certain kind of speaker; he may have drawn the wrong conclusions from the experience of one season, to find himself in difficulties with his European "prospects". I have



known of an agent, second to none in commercial standing, being entangled in unmanageable difficulties through having brought over a very eminent European who, appearing before a great New York audience, began to utter cacophony which no person in the hall could recognize as English. And I have heard of a well-established firm of agents carrying out its contract with a famous speaker, amid circumstances of exceptional difficulty, and having in consequence to dissolve.

There is no uniform rule governing the bureau's procedure and commission. Some agents prefer to offer a minimum guarantee to the lecturer, either including or excluding his travelling and hotel expenses. The guarantee arrangement, however, is becoming rare—except in the case of men of special repute, who could not otherwise be tempted, or men holding positions from which they cannot absent themselves without due compensation. There are a few agents who think it undesirable to all parties concerned that an itinerant speaker should be left to pay his own travelling expenses out of earnings, but their view is not nowadays generally endorsed. In the majority of cases the agent charges a commission on the gross fee, and from the remainder the lecturer pays all his current expenses. In easier times the agent's commission was on an average 20 per cent. It is now usually 25, or probably 30 per cent. if the agent undertakes to cover all the bills for circulars and other publicity. We can see, therefore, that the result in actual earnings must depend upon the total number of dates, the average fee, and the degree in which the agent is successful in grouping the engagements so that railroad fares are kept down. In the case of a lecturer with a large established public (say, a Hugh Walpole or Bertrand Russell) who may cross the continent and visit from thirty to forty States, there need be little doubling of journeys; but a speaker whose bookings are scattered, and who has no objection to awkward journeys, may find himself continually sent hither and yon. A "skedyule" which I personally should regard as satisfactory is one of a kind not unfamiliar in the good times of American prosperity, when a period of ten days might contain fifteen lectures within easy distances of a great Middle-Western centre.

"Lecturers make a great deal of money because they preach

the people tame", wrote an illustrious Englishman in the seventeenth century. He did not mean what we mean; he was not thinking of our order, yet in our time many people speak in John Selden's fashion about the gains of the trans-Atlantic lecturer. "I happen to know", said a popular English writer not long ago, "that Blank has cleaned up £6,000 annually for many years by lecturing in the United States"—and fantastic as this statement is, we may perhaps take it as representing more or less the guesses of some men who should know better. I have mentioned the many years of labour done by Mr. John Cowper Powys, the author of *Wolf Solent*. He worked the ground for a quarter of a century, winter by winter, thereby making a record among English speakers. He was the first to make a complete conquest of the women's clubs. He traversed the continent again and again, facing hardships such as the itinerant practitioner of today knows not. He possessed, in my judgment, the finest gift of natural oratory, and was endowed with a faculty much rarer than eloquence—namely, the power of æsthetic exposition and criticism. No contemporary speaker in America could equal Powys when it came to the imaginative appreciation of a work of great art. He invented a method which he calls "dithyrambic analysis", and carried it at times to giddy heights. No literary lecturer on the American continent had a reputation greater than his; certainly none worked harder. And yet Powys, in his astonishing *Autobiography*, mentions as a fact indicating exceptional financial success, that his earnings for a short time approached £1,000 in a season. Of course, there have been some English lecturers in America who have made much larger money than this—say, during a special tour following a striking achievement in action or the publication of a successful book. The huge popularity of Sir Philip Gibbs's day-to-day narrative of the War, syndicated through hundreds of newspapers, yielded an amazing series of audiences. For Captain Carpenter of Zeebrugge fame, there was, I believe, a greater demand during a short period than for almost any other speaker of the past twenty years. Rabindranath Tagore, at the height of the renown which came to him after the award of the Nobel Prize, was booked for a series of engagements which his agent described as unparalleled for a man of letters.

I should cite as an illustration of certain striking and permanent differences between England and America this fact, that ever since his first visit, on the strength of the books written during and soon after the War, Mr. Bertrand Russell could be booked at excellent fees all over the United States, at universities and popular forums, with the certainty that public interest in his "message" would not slacken to the end of a long season. Mr. Russell, I should judge, has no particular love for the work, but goes through it as an obligatory task. Not so Mr. Hugh Walpole, who before turning to Hollywood showed himself to be, first, an accomplished literary lecturer, and secondly, among novelist-lecturers, the most complete master of the game. He took the whole problem with businesslike seriousness—planning a long stay, setting a clear goal, co-operating with his agent, and bringing about a practical entente between the lecture-hall and the bookshop. From the days of the first novelist-lecturer to the days of Mr. Priestley and the *Bengal Lancer* no English author has understood organization in this field so well as Mr. Walpole.

There was one ludicrous lustrum during which two or three lecture bureaux, acting on the theory that the lecture centres were in the mood to pay anything for European "top-notchers", broke into an orgy of competition. "I don't book lecturers", said one enterprising agent, "I sell names", and he added that in his opinion no lecture as such was worth more than \$150, which happens now to be not far from the maximum fee for a foreign lecturer of proved quality. My acquaintance who prefers to sell names can still, notwithstanding the depression, do very well indeed for one or two special headliners of a season, but his highest adventures in present circumstances make no showing at all by comparison with the wild period to which I have referred.

The more startling facts will hardly seem credible to the English reader, but I state a few of them in bald actuality. There was one winter in particular when, as the Americans put it, the sky was the limit. A valued friend of mine, who directs a lecture institution which exerts an influence commensurate with its remarkable record, said this to me :

"As you know, we have had on our platform almost every important speaker from Europe and Asia since we were founded. People are asking



why there is no mention of X, Y and Z on our winter programme. When the question is put to me, though not otherwise, I give the reason, and tell them that never before have we declined the services of a speaker because of the extravagance of the fee. For one lecture by X or Y the agent asks \$3,500 " (£750 at par, and the pound sterling was then low), "and for Y, \$1,000."

All three of these wonderful names were English ; and if the reader asks whether in that fantastic time any hero or arch-angel of our race was able, even upon a single occasion, to command the fee then attached to X and Y, the answer is that, so far as I am aware, he was not. One of the trio did not appear ; the lectures arranged for the second were managed on a flexible plan ; the third obtained, and deserved, good but not inflated fees. I may add that in the boom period a few European lecturers were able to obtain a certain number of engagements at \$1,000 and even \$1,500 (£200 to £300), but it should hardly be necessary to add that those days have gone, almost certainly for ever. They were bad days. The agent took as commission all that the traffic would bear, and expenses were calculated upon an outrageous scale. The net return bore no relation to the gross fee. The odium, nevertheless, fell upon the lecturer himself, and grave damage was done to the name of England and to the English writing fraternity, not a few members of which, it was always remembered, kept up the old habit of despising the Americans as dollar-chasers ! I recall, more or less in this connection, part of a conversation with a leading member of New York's most exalted women's club :

"Why" (indignantly) "can't the Colony Club have Minerva N—— to lecture?"

"That is an easy one. Because the agent is asking \$500, and your committee won't pay it."

"I should think not, indeed. Why, no lecture is worth \$500 ! What ought we to do?"

"That's easy too" (coming from one who would not disagree with your valuation) : "Tell him that you want Minerva and can pay \$250. It will be all right."

It is rather pleasing, however, to remember that the names which were thus exploited were not all English. I am inclined, indeed, to think that the most distressful episode in the reckless period was that of Count Hermann Keyserling, by whom a large number of engagements were fulfilled, amid widespread diversion in the newspapers, at fees between \$750 and \$1,000.

For the competent English lecturer, with good subjects and some years of hard service behind him, accustomed to invitations from colleges, clubs, and people's forums, the practical minimum can be put at \$100, from which the agent's commission and all travelling expenses are deducted. The reckoning is easy, and so is the deduction. They will not greatly encourage the young writer or politician, who has thought of the American lecture field as Tom Tiddler's ground.

Mr. Winston Churchill has a place by himself, and his experience four years ago was so unusual that the leading facts may well be stated here. As a young adventurer in the field Mr. Churchill enjoyed a remarkable first success. His mother was American and of a prominent family; he himself was at that time fresh from his adventures as a war correspondent in the Boer campaign. Thirty years later, when he decided to go again, he was among the best-known men in the English-speaking world, one of the three or four genuine orators in Parliament, and constantly described as the most picturesque and effective speaker in the Commons. His market value was deemed to be higher than that of any other British statesman, except perhaps Mr. MacDonald and Mr. Lloyd George. His original contract was for 45 engagements to come within ten weeks; and I believe that the total sum guaranteed by the adventurous bureau which made this remarkable deal was larger than any sum paid to a speaker from England since the sensational tour of H. M. Stanley, the African explorer.

I remember that in the spring of 1931 the agency was advised that a political crisis and a general election were almost certain in England before the end of the year, but the warning was not allowed to interfere with the bookings. The crisis befell, the election followed, and a large number of dates had to be changed. But that was not all. Mr. Churchill had spoken only once, and that not in New York, when he had a narrow escape in a motor-car accident which made necessary a long convalescence. This involved a further and extensive shifting of dates, so that when Mr. Churchill at last set out on his tour the tickets for many of his meetings had been sold three times over. Here was an enterprise certainly without a parallel in America. It testified to Mr. Churchill's great reputation, and

could fairly be cited as an example of unusual skill and persistence on the part of his lecture agency. I heard Mr. Churchill's initial lecture in New York, to an audience which filled the largest hall of the Brooklyn Institute, and I was interested to observe the strict objectivity with which the task of the evening was carried through. Not a personal word was uttered. Mr. Churchill spoke on "The Pathway of the English-speaking Peoples", and kept fairly close to his manuscript—I should judge on the assumption that, in America as in some other countries, a lecture is a discourse to be read. This is a point of no little importance upon which I shall have a later word to say.

I come now to the demands and difficulties of the American lecture platform. The demands are serious, not to say exacting; the difficulties are of many kinds, and not a few of them may be described as cumulative, arising from the persistence of stories about foreign lecturers who have gone before. The first essential for a man or woman setting out to speak in North America is a clear realization that American audiences, in all parts of the country, are not to be put off with thin material or poor delivery. A public which has at all times accorded to the platform, in respect of political and educational matters, a status somewhat analogous to that of the pulpit, has learned to insist upon a high standard of platform technique. And American lecture institutions can prove their right to the best. A women's club in good standing can and does choose the most impressive names in connection with the subjects on its programme. There is no sense in the advice by which an untried speaker is somewhat harassed, as to Americans wanting this or that kind of discourse. American audiences are accustomed to the widest variety of platform manner. I never heard of a chairman or committee offering advance instructions on method or style. The assumption is that the lecturer must be allowed to do his job in his own way, and the one thing everywhere expected is that he do it with his might. And this brings me to the not unimportant matter of the complaints made—I am bound to say, continuously and in all directions—against English speakers as a class, and especially against the literary lecturer.



It is alleged that too many of them are untrustworthy in their treatment of practical arrangements. In excuse for non-fulfilment of an engagement, it is said, they may plead fatigue or a too-difficult railroad journey; they may be over anxious to move on and cut the social part of the day; in not a few cases they yield to the temptation of giving up in the middle of an itinerary. It is remarkable—as at least two agents have grumbled to me—in how many instances a speaker is recalled to England, thus leaving his agent high and dry. The novelist-lecturer, moreover, too often displays his lack of platform training; he wishes to talk about his own books, or he harps upon the outworn theme of the Modern Novel. (This last point, surely, is not a valid grievance. The novelist turns lecturer, presumably, because audiences like to meet an author in person, and a novelist is unlikely to have a subject apart from his own trade.) But there is one complaint which, in my considerable experience, outweighs all others. It is that the literary lecturer, and not he alone by any means, is frequently inaudible or else that he speaks an affected English that no American or Canadian audience could be expected to understand.

Here, of course, is a most serious matter, and we English have to face the fact that its importance is certain to increase. The processes of phonetic change are decidedly different on our side of the Atlantic from the corresponding processes in the English-speaking lands overseas, and one result is that year by year the so-called standard English of the mother country draws farther away from the English of North America. I should say that no English person can realize how far the disparity has gone unless he knows America and has listened to a good many English public-speakers in the American atmosphere. The rapid phonetic decay of our time has made a gulf between the generations in England. Relatively speaking, few men and women under forty who have grown up in cultivated households speak the same English as their elders: the vowels that came naturally to their parents they apparently do not hear and could not reproduce.

The moral of this, in its application to America, is unmistakable. The language of most of the younger men now in Parliament would be largely unintelligible if spoken from an American

platform, while it is everywhere recognized that the Anglican pulpit voice or the speech of the conventional university don must to speakers of English overseas sound like a foreign utterance. The difference, I repeat, is mainly a difference between the generations, for it would be agreed in America that no more satisfying English has been heard from the platform than that coming from the veterans who have visited the United States in recent years—for instance, Lord Balfour, Mr. MacDonald, Mr. Lloyd George, Sir Oliver Lodge. Sir Norman Angell and Sir Frederick Whyte, again, are heard everywhere with pleasure and followed without difficulty. And I add another and particularly good example. Last winter Lord Lytton was heard in New York and a few other cities as the inaugural lecturer on the new Jonathan Peterson foundation. No public man from England has in recent years made a more admirable impression. Apart from Lord Lytton's personal distinction and the quality of his addresses, this was due to the perfection of his English sounds.

It is idle, as I have suggested, to imagine that the job of lecturing has in America to be carried out according to a conventional plan. "There are nine-and-sixty ways of constructing tribal lays, and every single one of them is right." But a few plain principles need to be observed, and these at any rate, I think, should be treated strictly as rules. The first is concerned with inaudibility. An audience takes for granted that the primary duty of any speaker is to make himself heard, and Americans have been led to infer, from the number of British examples they are able to quote, that English audiences must be accustomed to suffering in silence. And with clearness of speech goes vitality. American public speaking is often pitched in a monotone, and yet it is certainly true that everywhere in the United States the visiting lecturer is expected to be animated, to speak as though he were thoroughly interested in his subject and in his own way of presenting it. The numerous debating teams from the English universities touring America in recent years have won their successes chiefly because they have made an impression of lively minds at work, and the American public has been encouraged to think that this is the characteristic merit of the English style. This point by itself would seem to

answer the question as to the use of manuscript. Paper has almost disappeared from the American platform. So strong has the prejudice become that when, in 1932, I was invited by a New York society to deliver a bicentennial address on George Washington, the suggestion that I be permitted to read it was emphatically turned down. We can understand, therefore, the disappointment that finds expression when a famous speaker from England is seen to be provided with the manuscript of a formal oration, and particularly when it has been announced that the subject of the day forms the staple of his offering to the American public. I do not, of course, overlook the fact that there are various ways of using manuscript. The fortunate speakers are those with long sight, who can stand free of the desk and read without the secret being revealed.

I finish with a brief comment upon an important aspect of a many-sided subject. The relations between Britain and America are of incalculable significance. We are all ready to acknowledge this, and we shall be compelled to consider more and more seriously all the influences that are shaping and modifying those relations, and with the development of world radio the spoken word becomes more than ever important. The visiting lecturer, inevitably, is part of that importance; and while the affairs of his tribe are being rapidly reduced (the great and romantic exceptions being always excluded) to the plain prose of business with very modest rewards, the available evidence does not point to a numerical decline. The American platform will continue to make its appeal to speakers from English-speaking lands. How far, and in what respect, the cause of Anglo-American understanding has been aided by the work of the itinerant English lecturer, it is not for a humble labourer in the vineyard to say. But one thing at least he would not wish to avoid saying. It is that a long experience of travel and daily contacts with ever-changing scenes and communities means necessarily a somewhat unusual acquaintance with the land and its people. And who, knowing America, could hesitate to add that the memories implied in such acquaintance comprise "part of our life's inestimable good"?



## MARK TWAIN

BY R. ELLIS ROBERTS.

**I**N the preface to *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* Mark Twain tells his readers that Huck Finn is "drawn from life".

He is more than that. In spite of all the objections raised by a stiff pedantry against that criticism which discovers personal experiences, personal hopes and aspirations in the characters of dramatic authors, no reader who is sensitive to a great artist's degrees of representing reality can fail to recognize which among an author's creations represent most fully his own longings and his own losses. This is true even of Shakespeare. It is a sound instinct which has led the imaginative critics of the world to find Shakespeare himself in Hamlet, in Falstaff and in Prospero. There is no identity between the poet and these persons: but the characters who live most vividly in a man's plays or novels are always those into whom he has put the very spirit which has compelled him to write. It is not that a great artist fails to give vitality to characters with whom he has, in conscious desire at least, very little in common—there is a vitality in disapprobation or in hatred—Goneril has no lack of vitality, nor Iago. But no one can mistake the change in temper, in imaginative sympathy and intellectual coalition when an author creates a character who is not so much representative as symbolic of himself. The release which an author experiences in the making of characters he does not love except as his handiwork is a release *from* something in himself which he would fain be rid of: supreme instances of this are Balzac's Grandet, Tolstoy's Karénin or Shakespeare's Timon or Iago. The release expressed in the making of the loved characters—and inestimable or disreputable persons can arouse their maker's love as much as honourable people—is a release *into* something which, until it is interpreted in art, remains only a vague longing in the artist—Dostoevsky's Myshkin, Shakespeare's Juliet or Falstaff or Hamlet, Balzac's

Pons, Dickens' *Pickwick*. It is to this category that Huck Finn belongs : and general opinion is right in holding that *Huckleberry Finn* is Mark Twain's best book—better than the admirable *Life on the Mississippi*, because it has more of creative imagination; better than *The Innocents Abroad*, because it is free from that uneasy impatience, that strain of defiant irreverence, that loud boastfulness, masking an ineradicable shyness which Mark Twain indulged when he was confronted by a culture he was too hurried to understand, and too scornfully American to try to understand.

Mark Twain is a great American author ; and it is to the credit of English critics that they realized, before Mark Twain's own countrymen, that a great national author was, simply, a great author. For a great deal of the crudeness in Mark Twain, for his inclination to bring his six-shooter and high boots so arrogantly and irrelevantly into the salons, the museums, the picture-galleries of Europe, we must blame the polite pundits of Bostonian America, rather than Mark Twain himself. They condescended to him, and their condescension was because they felt he exposed American civilization to the jeers of Europe. They were busy in convincing Europe that the best people in America could assimilate and reproduce the culture of the old world. Some did, but without abandoning their specific American heritages—Hawthorne and Melville, for instance ; one other, at least, Edgar Allan Poe, was as remote from national characteristics as any author can be. A great many, however, were still, in matters of culture, unweaned from Europe—and disastrously separate from the normal life of their own country. Too many put all the emphasis on *England* and forgot that proud and promising epithet, *New*. It was these whom Mark Twain horrified and disgusted ; and they were disconcerted and at a bitter loss when they found this prophet of the new America hailed in England as a man of outstanding genius.

Mark Twain saw no reason why he, as American, should not criticize the old world as severely as European critics criticized America. He was wrong ; for his criticisms often sprang from prejudice or sheer ignorance, or plain insensibility (as in the disgraceful—in its effect—retelling of the story of Abelard and Héloïse) ; but he was wrong not because he claimed his right to criticize Europe, but because he claimed that right as an American

rather than as himself. And he was driven to that attitude by his sense of the maddening injustice of the attitude which assumed, with as little justification as there was for his derogatory denunciations, that any European had a right to condemn anything American, simply because it was not European. The excitement, the exhilaration, the courageous gusto, the freedom, the careless ease, the gigantic romantic lying typical of American pioneer life had no place in American literature until Mark Twain wrote, as heedless as he could be of the regulations and conventions that insisted that whatever else the artist might be, and whatever he was trying to represent, his first business was to be polite, to hold no mirror up to life until the glass had been discreetly clouded by a slightly permeable veil.

In her book on her father, Clara Clemens writes about his power of anger :

Every member of our family was provided with a healthy temper, but none of us possessed one comparable to the regal proportion of Father's. When his escaped into the open, it was a grand sight. There was the liberation of the caged wild animals of the earth. It did me good to see it, a raging flood of waters that tore away puerile dams insulting to freedom, Father's temper shone with the light of his genius. . . . He almost never permitted his wrath to rise towards my Mother. And it seemed to me an unique achievement that a man with so fiery a nature could prevent the flames from scorching the heart of his life's treasure. It is easy to forget one's ideals in times of stress.

A great deal has been written, since his death, about the effect on Mark Twain of his marriage and the kind of life which his wife expected him to lead. At the time of the publication of his letters in 1913, I emphasized how crippling in some respects had been his deference to his wife ; and this idea of Mark Twain as a man who was unnaturally curbed, forced to observe conventions that had behind them nothing that he revered except that they were his wife's, was elaborated later by Mr. van Wyck Brooks in his excellent (and entirely independent) analysis of Mark Twain's genius—*The Ordeal of Mark Twain*. There is a real danger now that too much stress should be laid on this aspect. It is absurd to write as if we have in Mark Twain a spangled Dostoevsky, a thwarted philosopher, or a baffled leader of rebellious thought. The fact that he used his humour at times as a safety valve, as a way of escape from the intolerable



routine of a provincial society must not blind one to the fact that he was always a humorous author ; a funny man, often a tremendously funny man. Genius can be slightly muzzled: it may be led at times into sly paths of self-satisfaction in revenge for the boredom inflicted on it by uncongenial society. Genius cannot be completely diverted from its own paths. Compare Mark Twain with a greater contemporary, Ibsen. Ibsen suffered, too, from a provincial suburbanity. Ibsen, too, was happy—and no doubt occasionally chagrined—in a romantic marriage. Ibsen was also a humorist. We cannot, however, imagine Ibsen as a creator of the Titanic buffoonery we meet in Mark Twain; of the careless, generous, nonsensical fun which we find in Mark Twain. And had Mark Twain possessed the power of profound thought, the deep analytic insight into character which mark Ibsen's work, it would have come out spite of Boston, and spite of his beloved Olivia.

Looking back on what has been written on this problem, re-reading the letters, Paine's life and Clara Clemens's book, I feel that, after all, though Olivia was to blame in part for increasing her husband's natural diffidence, the powers behind her were far more blameworthy. It was, to use the phrase of Ibsen's Dr. Stockman, "the damn'd compact liberal majority"; the cold, dull, polite, smooth Anglicized Bostonian Brahmins, the Philistines of philosophy, the prigs of art, the undertakers of religion, who lamed and shackled Mark Twain. They were false to the one duty committed to a socially superior class, to people of higher education, whom education had given the chance of contact with a better culture than Mark Twain's. They did not try to help this large, shambling, untutored, generous child of the West to develop in the best way on his own lines; they tried to make him as one of themselves. When he needed salvation, they tried to teach him to say Shibboleth. It was against them his wrath should have raged. No doubt there were times when it did; but he was far too pliable to their suggestions that he was inferior, socially and intellectually, to the established Europeanized American man of letters; and he allowed them, as he once put it in a letter, to "comb him all to hell"—the native vigour of the language, as usual, compensates a little for the indignity of the process under which he suffered.

Mark Twain once wrote his spiritual and emotional autobiography : his confessions. It will not be found in the pseudo-philosophical, pseudo-scientific writings—*The Mysterious Stranger* and such-like—in which he betrays too clearly that he is a fellow-countryman of Robert Ingersoll, who kept in a state of electric vitality the corpse of eighteenth-century deism. It can be found in solution in many of the letters, in the travel-books and in many of the sketches. But there is one brief passage in one of his best-known books where the whole of his conflict with the world is put down for us to read. The whole agony and humour and dismay of that conflict is in the fact that it was a conflict with those he loved. Mark Twain was happy and often wise when he hated ; he was happy and nearly always silly when he despised ; he was disconsolate and amused and enraged and grieved at heart when he loved. All of that terrible distress is exposed, as only a great humorist could expose it, in the opening chapter of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* :—

Tom and me found the money that the robbers hid in the cave, and it made us rich. We got six thousand dollars apiece—all gold. It was an awful sight of money when it was piled up. Well, Judge Thatcher, he took it and put it out at interest, and it fetched us a dollar a day apiece, all the year round—more than a body could tell what to do with. The Widow Douglas, she took me for her son, and allowed she would civilize me ; but it was rough living in the house all the time, considering how dismal regular and decent the widow was in all her ways ; and so when I couldn't stand it no longer, I lit out. I got into my old rags and my sugar-hogshead again, and was free and satisfied, But Tom Sawyer he hunted me up and said he was going to start a band of robbers, and I might join if I would go back to the widow and be respectable. So I went back.

The widow cried over me, and called me a poor lost lamb, and she called me a lot of other names too, but she never meant no harm by it. She put me in them new clothes again, and I couldn't do nothing but sweat and sweat, and feel all cramped up. Well then, the old thing commenced again. The widow rung a bell for supper, and you had to come to time. When you got to the table you couldn't go right to eating, but you had to wait for the widow to tuck down her head and grumble a little over the victuals, though there warn't really anything the matter with them. That is, nothing only everything was cooked by itself. In a barrel of odds and ends it is different ; things get mixed up, and the juice kind of swaps around and the things go better.

After supper she got out her book and learned me about Moses and the " Bulrushers " ; and I was in a sweat to find out all about him ; but by-and-by she let it out that Moses had been dead a considerable long time ; so then I didn't care no more about him ; because I don't take no stock in dead people.

Pretty soon, I wanted to smoke, and asked the widow to let me. But she wouldn't. She said it was a mean practice and wasn't clean, and I must try not to do it any more. That is just the way with some people. They get down on a thing when they don't know nothing about it. Here she was abothering about Moses, which was no kin to her, and no use to anybody, being gone, you see, yet finding a power of fault with me for doing a thing that had some good in it. And she took snuff, too; of course, that was all right, because she done it herself.

Her sister, Miss Watson, a tolerable slim old maid, with goggles on, had just come to live with her, and took a set at me now, with a spelling-book. She worked me middling hard for about an hour, and then the widow made her ease up. I couldn't stood it much longer. Then for an hour it was deadly dull, and I was fidgety. Miss Watson would say, "Don't put your feet up there, Huckleberry"; and, "don't scrunch up like that, Huckleberry—set up straight"; and pretty soon she would say, "Don't gap and stretch like that, Huckleberry—why don't you try to behave"? Then she told me all about the bad place, and I said I wished I was there. She got mad, then, but I didn't mean no harm. All I wanted was to go somewheres; all I wanted was a change, I warn't particular. She said it was wicked to say what I said; said she wouldn't say it for the whole world; she was going to live so as to go to the good place. Well, I couldn't see no advantage in going where she was going, so I made up my mind I wouldn't try for it. But I never said so, because it would only make trouble, and wouldn't do no good.

Now she had got a start, and she went on and told me all about the good place. She said all a body would have to do there was to go around all day long with a harp and sing for ever and ever. So I didn't think much of it. But I never said so. I asked her if she reckoned Tom Sawyer would go there, and she said, not by a considerable sight. I was glad about that, because I wanted him and me to be together.

Miss Watson she kept pecking at me, and it got tiresome and lonesome. By-and-by they fetched the niggers in and had prayers, and then everybody was off to bed. I went up to my room with a piece of candle and put it on the table. Then I set down in a chair by the window and tried to think of something cheerful, but it warn't no use. I felt so lonesome I most wished I was dead. The stars was shining, and the leaves rustled in the woods ever so mournful; and I heard an owl, away off, who-whooping about somebody that was dead, and a whippowill and a dog crying about somebody that was going to die; and the wind was trying to whisper something to me and I couldn't make out what it was, and so it made the cold shivers run over me. Then away out in the woods I heard that kind of a sound that a ghost makes when it wants to tell about something that's on its mind and can't make itself understood, and so can't rest easy in its grave and has to go about that way every night grieveing. I got so down-hearted and scared, I did wish I had some company. Pretty soon a spider came crawling up my shoulder, and I flipped it off and it lit in the candle; and before I could budge it was all shrivelled up. I didn't need anybody to tell me that that was an awful bad sign and would fetch me some bad luck, so I was scared and most shook the clothes off me. I got up and turned around in my tracks three times and crossed my breast every time;



and then I tied up a little lock of my hair with a thread to keep witches away. But I hadn't no confidence. You can do that when you've lost a horseshoe that you've found, instead of nailing it up over the door, but I hadn't heard anybody say it was any way to keep off bad luck when you'd killed a spider.

I set down again, a-shaking all over, and got out my pipe for a smoke ; for the house was all as still as death, now, and so the widow wouldn't know. Well, after a long time I heard the clock away off in the town go boom—boom—boom—twelve licks—and all still again—still than ever. Pretty soon I heard a twig snap, down in the dark amongst the trees — something was a-stirring. I set still and listened. Directly I could just barely hear a “me-yow! me-yow!” down there. That was good! Says I, “me-yow! me-yow!” as soft as I could, and then I put out the light and scrambled out of the window on to the shed. Then I slipped down to the ground and crawled in amongst the trees and sure enough there was Tom Sawyer waiting for me.

The value of this autobiographical fragment is that it is not written consciously as a confession. The man who sets out to be candid nearly always misses the truth ; he not only dramatizes himself, he arranges and overcharges the facts. The man who projects himself into another character and through that character shows his desires, his disappointments and vexations may achieve a degree of self-revelation which neither St. Augustine or Bunyan, Casanova or Frank Harris, Cellini or Trelawney can attain. The truth is told best by the great liars—and Mark Twain was a magnificent liar. It will be said that, if I am right in regarding these fifteen hundred words or so as Mark Twain's intimate autobiography, I am on the side of those who declare that Mark Twain always remained a boy—that he was essentially non-adult. In a sense, that is so—but we must not fall into the error of thinking that Mark Twain was less adult than the critics who stigmatize his perpetual boyishness. There are young prigs in plenty ; and every fourth form has its one or two superior lads who boast of their own sophistication in a spirit quite as childish as the simplicity they condemn. Perhaps no artist ever completely grows up ; certainly that artist does not who complains of the childishness of those who exacerbate the serious, shiny-foreheaded, pragmatical, teasing little critics, who believe that philately is a more adult occupation than playing at brigands or Red Indians. The only really adult people are the saints, and they have never been shy of the pleasures of the nursery. I don't mind Mark Twain

being accused of boyishness if the critic who makes the charge realizes that it is equally valid against, say, Samuel Butler and George Bernard Shaw.

It would be a congenial business to go through the passage in detail, and point out how in every sentence there is a disguised reference to Mark Twain's own career. But that's a job for a psychologist. I must be content with a few hints. There's the reference to his early fortune, the complaint that his natural instinct to gamble with it (which he indulged so disastrously) is checked by his friends. Then how much ardour there is in the grouch against the effort to "sivilize" him, and his own obstinate determination to resist it—"when I couldn't stand it no longer, I lit out". In Huck Finn's dislike of punctuality and regular meals and polite behaviour at table we have the whole of Mark Twain's distaste for the conventions which curse a society that acquiesces in the rule of formality rather than plays the charade of etiquette. Then in the sentence about Moses, Mark Twain rejoices in his gravest fault—his set passion to treat the past with irreverence, because he was maddened by the tiresome, unmeaning reverence paid to it by his cultured acquaintances. Yet it would have pleased rather than enraged him if he knew how his sentences about the good place recalls one of the most famous passages in the mediæval *Aucassin and Nicolette*, where hell is preferred to heaven on account of the good company to be found there. Narrow-minded Christians have pounced on the passage in *Aucassin and Nicolette* just as some of Mark Twain's Christian friends would denounce him. It is odd that they could not recognize that Mark Twain was only expressing the same truth as did William Morris in the familiar "Fellowship is Heaven: lack of fellowship is Hell".

Mark Twain was, after all, not to be held any more than was Huck Finn. In spite of all prohibitions, in spite of his own weaknesses, in spite of his despair at the cruelty of nature, the dread of the dark, the fear that haunts a man as he travels through the quiet and ominous whisperings of a great forest, he had his refuge. . . .

Says I, "me-yow! me-yow" as soft as I could, and then I put out the light and scrambled out of the window on to the shed. Then I slipped down to the ground and crawled in amongst the trees, and sure enough there was Tom Sawyer waiting for me.

There was always Tom Sawyer as a comfort in the dark, and a refuge from the world of blanketing conventions. There was always for Mark Twain his art, his story-telling, his irrepressible humour. There he could "loaf and invite his soul". There he was master. That he is a master there can be no question, not even in this centenary year when notoriously reputations are at their ebb. How far Mark Twain has declined in popular favour it is hard to judge. He suffers from the sheer bulk of his writing, and there will be few to agree with Mr. Stephen Leacock in his estimate which puts Mark Twain on a level with Charles Dickens. None of the American author's works can rank with the greatest of Dickens; the fact that he was a pleasanter man, a more lovable character and, at his funniest, a more amusing, more extravagant artist than Dickens cannot hide the fact that he had little of Dickens' huge powers of creation. Much of Mark Twain's best work is but elaborate, wildly exuberant anecdote. Except for *Huckleberry Finn*—his greatest success—and *The Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc*—an ambitious, rather frigid failure—his works are shapeless. I have a great liking for that neglected work which he wrote in collaboration with Charles Dudley Warner, *The Gilded Age*. It is a careful, honest piece of work, full of shrewd criticism, and remains the truest document in the history of that worship of gold which gave to the States the empire of California. *Life on the Mississippi* is a rare record of that pioneering America which was one of the marvels of the nineteenth century. While I can recognize the savagery of the satire in *The Yankee at the Court of King Arthur*, I have never been able to rate this book as highly as do some. It suffers from the same vulgarity which distinguishes the episodic retelling of the Abelard and Héloïse stories. I do not believe that this vulgarity was native to Mark Twain. It only infects him when he is writing on sex or on death: and it was born, I believe, from his honourable reaction against the prudish attitude toward both which characterized polite America in his day. Death and sex were both, so far as possible, hushed up. Indeed, all natural functions were treated as improper in themselves—as having an innate impudicity. In rebellion against this, Mark Twain spoke and wrote of death and the dead with a deplorable insensibility, a lamentable levity; he loved to



drag decaying corpses into the conversaziones of the Brahmins, and assail their handkerchiefed nostrils with the stench of dissolution. The taboo on sex produced different results. He must have been shocked at the lack of Christian charity towards those guilty of sins of the flesh, but his protest took the unfortunate shape of a severer denunciation. He was determined to excel in the exaltation of a mere and meagre continence ; and he took a morbid delectation in debasing the world's great love stories to the level of the stews. How dare those uncultured, plumbing-lacking mediævalists have a freedom denied to the citizens of God's own country ? So Lancelot and Guenevere must join Abelard in a dirty abyss of ungenerous scorn.

The great Mark Twain is not to be found in the positive, denunciatory, callow American attacking times and people whom he never had the grace or the wit to see as they were. He is to be found in the pictures of the American life which he knew—the life of the hard-drinking, hard-swearing, essentially kindly and grossly sentimental men who shared all his characteristics except his genius, and who could appreciate in him a teller of tales taller than any they dared to invent. He is to be found in the Mark Twain who laughingly mocked his own disabilities or dislikes, as in the essay on the German language or the passages about Alpine climbing or hunting the chamois. He is to be found in the shrewd and just moments of indignation at international injustice—as in the letter to Queen Victoria about income-tax—and found most supremely in the tender and profoundly understanding books and short stories on the America of his own youth, works in which a whole epoch of history is preserved with justice, humour, and an unexpected beauty.

His eminence can be seen clearly enough if one compares him with his successors. If we look in America today for any one of his size, one will have to imagine a combination of Ring Lardner, Sinclair Lewis, and Booth Tarkington ; and even then there will be missing the great, magnificent unconsciousness, the careless generosity and extravagance, the quality of high spirits which put him in the same company as the great picaresque novelists. He was not a great novelist : he was not a fine artist—but his work has that touch of ease, of richness, of abandonment which distinguish the Gothic as distinct from the classical genius.

## THE NEW GHETTO

BY CECIL ROTH

WHEN, not long since, the remains of the teeming Roman Ghetto fell victim to Signor Mussolini's all-embracing passion for reconstruction and reform, sentimental antiquaries all the world over deplored the passing of one of the last material relics of a system which once played an important part in Europe. But they were, alas, premature. The Italian Ghetto is nothing more than a memory ; but, by an amazing retrogression, a new Ghetto is now coming into being, before our eyes, in Germany. Not a figure of speech (as when one speaks of the London Ghetto in the Whitechapel neighbourhood, or the New York Ghetto on the East Side), but a compulsory institution, formally constituted and legally enforced, in the full tradition of the Middle Ages.

Throughout history there had been a natural tendency for Jews, as for every other minority, to foregather in specific areas for convenience in their social, economic, and religious life ; and most cities of mediæval Europe had their Jewries, the population of which was predominantly Jewish. But there was no compulsion in the system. Many Jews continued to live scattered about in isolation where they pleased, while non-Jews, attracted sometimes by the more solid architecture, had no compunction in taking houses in the middle of the Jewish quarter. (It was by the nobility, indeed, that the Jews were gradually extruded from the " Old Jewry " in London.)

It was the Lateran Council of 1179 which laid the foundation of the later, more stringent system, by forbidding true believers to lodge amongst the infidel, lest they should be contaminated by his beliefs. For a long time this provision was regarded more as a hope than as a positive rule of conduct : and those places where a formal, legally-enforced Jewish quarter existed, cut off from the remainder of the town, were in a very small

minority. It was left to the Counter-Reformation to perfect the system and to make it—at least so far as Catholic Europe was concerned—universal. By his Bull *cum nimis absurdum* of 1555, Pope Paul IV stressed the “absurdity” of the present state of the Jews, and re-enacted against them down to its least detail all the repressive system which the Middle Ages had been content to admire as an ideal. Above all, he decreed that they were henceforth to be segregated strictly in their own quarter, which was to be surrounded by a high wall and provided with gates, closed at night. This was subsequently known, in imitation of the existing Jewish quarter at Venice (situated in the *Getto Nuovo* or New Foundry), as the Ghetto; in Germany the corresponding term was *Judengasse*. Other provisions enacted at the same time, and constituting an integral part of the system, forbade the Jews to practise medicine among Christians, to employ Christian servants, or to be called by any honorific title. They were excluded from the professions, only the meanest occupations remaining open to them. They were forced to wear a distinctive badge, in the form of a yellow hat (in Germany a yellow circle, worn on the outer garment over the heart, was general). They were forbidden to own real estate, having to dispose of all in their possession at whatever sacrifice. This all-embracing code was henceforth enforced, in Catholic and parts of Protestant Europe, with all strictness: and it formed an integral part of the Ghetto system, which was to remain a blot upon Western civilization for centuries.

It is amazing to see how closely this precedent is being followed in Germany to-day. Thus far the final step, of compelling the Jews to live in specially-assigned streets, like the former *Judengassen*, has not been taken. But almost every other concomitant is already part of German law. The Jews have been driven out of political, social and intellectual life. They are being frozen out of commerce. They are no longer allowed to mix with non-Jews on equal terms, in work or in relaxation or in play. We are now very near the border-line. Had the Ghetto system been formally reintroduced three years ago, on the morrow of the Nazi Revolution, the conscience of civilized humanity would have been shocked. But to-day, the transition would be hardly perceptible. A brief rescript would suffice,



intimating that (ostensibly, perhaps, to prevent an outbreak of violence against them) Jews may no longer live in the same streets as Christians. The local authorities would then indicate what streets are to be set aside for Jewish occupation. Later on, one might witness the final ignominy of walls and gates, closed sedulously at night and on the great occasions of the Nazi (not, of course, in the twentieth century, the Catholic) calendar. This development, a wild flight of the imagination not long ago, is to-day more than possible: it is probable. In great cities like Berlin, with its 150,000 Jews, the precise mediæval precedent would be a little difficult to follow. In the provinces, however, it is already being held up for admiration and for imitation. Well-informed observers are of the opinion that legal enactment is only a matter of time.

But, even without the institution of a formal Ghetto with its walls and gates, an intellectual and social Ghetto is already being enforced by law. Jews have been excluded from the universities, the professions, journalism, literature, the stage, the concert platform, government employment. Every endeavour is made to undermine their economic position. "Aryans" are warned that he who buys from Jews is a traitor to his country. More absurdly still, in country districts the peasants are warned not to sell to Jews.

In points of detail the fidelity to mediæval precedent is in general ridiculously close. The Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 instituted the Jewish Badge (for which some extremists in Germany are agitating to-day) on the pretext that sexual intercourse had taken place unwittingly between Jews and Christians—an offence considered little less serious than incest, and punished as such. This is precisely the motive for much of the recent Nazi legislation; with the reservation, however, that the mediæval Church knew nothing of the "racial purity" doctrine, and that Jews could escape the restrictions placed upon them by the formality of baptism. In many places in Germany Jews are now excluded from the public baths. This, too, was a frequent abuse in the Middle Ages, when the same regulation was usual, or else Jews were admitted only on specific days, otherwise reserved for prostitutes. By recent regulations Jews are being expelled from the antique business, in which

they were once so prominent. Here, Hitler's Germany improves upon the Middle Ages: for then dealing in second-hand commodities was one of the very few openings left for the Jew—this, indeed, proving the basis of his antiquarian tastes.

The seal has been set upon the system of the Ghetto without walls by a series of recent regulations. One of them has excluded the Jewish children from the general scholastic organization and ordered the setting up of separate schools for them. By another, marriages between Jews and citizens of German or racially related blood, as well as extra-marital relations between them, are forbidden, and will be punished by penal servitude or imprisonment. Jews must not engage female domestic help of German or racially-related blood under forty-five years of age. (It is computed that upwards of 40,000 German women will lose their employment through this provision!) Finally, German citizenship with full political rights is made dependent henceforth on the special grant of a Reich citizenship charter, to be given only to those of German or racially-related blood, who have proved by their attitude that they are willing and fit to serve the German people and the Reich loyally. This deprives Jews (and, incidentally, all who are known to be out of sympathy with the present system of government, or may have private enemies in high places) of German citizenship.

Whether or no, then, it suits the convenience of the Nazi authorities to institute a formal Ghetto; whether or no they can become so impervious to European opinion as to take this final step, the Ghetto system is already in being in Germany in almost every detail. It is being enforced, too, with a ferocity and a fanaticism which perhaps has no precedent. German Jewry, until a few years ago, was the most vital section of the most advanced nation in the world: it is no exaggeration indeed to say that it was, perhaps, the most highly civilized fraction of the human race. It has been thrown down from this pedestal almost at a blow, and driven back into the condition from which it emerged so painfully—and with such dazzling results—in the first half of the nineteenth century. No longer do Jews dare to look back upon the life of the old *Judengasse* with sentimental regrets. It has loomed up again over them too menacingly; and they scan every grim detail fearfully, lest it should be

revived at their expense by some sadistic antiquary of to-day.

There was indeed—though the last generation preferred to forget it—hardly any limit to the tale of indignities to which the Jew was subjected in the Ghetto age.\* Many famous communities existed, down to the eighteenth century, on a precarious tenure under an agreement lasting for only a short term of years, continually modified and sometimes not renewed. From some cities there was complete exclusion down to a period almost within living memory: Nuremberg, for example, the headquarters of Herr Streicher, which had to be vacated at sundown. (It was thus that the community of Fürth, just outside its walls—the birthplace of both Adolph Ochs, of the *New York Times*, and of Leopold Ullstein, founder of the Ullstein publishing house—attained its artificial importance.) To prevent any semblance of authority, the Jew was forbidden to ride in a carriage, or to employ a Christian servant, or even to have some kindly neighbour perform him the service of kindling a fire upon the Sabbath-day. A love-affair (or more sordid connexion) between a Jew and a Christian was regarded as a most serious offence, punishable by flogging, the galleys, or worse. The veriest urchin in the Imperial City of Frankfurt expected every Jew to get out of his way respectfully when he approached and bade him look to his manners. Throughout Germany Jews (like cattle) had to pay a special toll, or *Leibzoll*, when they crossed the frontiers of the innumerable petty states, or entered any city. When they appeared in the law-courts, the oath had to be taken *more judaico*, according to a special, degrading formula, and to the accompaniment of an obnoxious ceremonial. War was even waged upon their books, which were confiscated, censored or burned without compunction. During the whole of Eastertide, from Holy Thursday onwards, the gates of the Ghetto were kept rigorously closed, and no Jew dared to show his face in the streets.

While this all applied to some extent all over those parts of Europe where the Ghetto system prevailed, it was Germany which, with ruthless logic, brought the repression implicit in

---

\* The following pages are based to a large extent on my *Short History of the Jewish People* about to be published by Messrs. Macmillan, to whom I am indebted for permission to utilize it here.



it to its climax. Up to a certain point Jews might be useful to the city or the State; but, beyond this, their presence was superfluous, and hence resented. Official license of residence was generally given to a specified number of households, which might not be exceeded on any pretext. By the natural process of Nature, the population tended to grow. Births could not be controlled by any legal enactment. But weddings could, and the number of families kept down by this means. In many places, therefore, rigorous control was established over Jewish marriages. Only the eldest child of each family was allowed to take himself a wife and build up his own home; or else marriage permits were issued in strict proportion to the number of deaths. In any case, no Jew was allowed to marry without official license. Thus, the most sacred and most fundamental right of human beings was denied to that section of the human race which perhaps prized it most.

There was, indeed, another side to the life of the *Judengasse*. It facilitated the development and the conservation of a Jewish mode of life, of Jewish intellectual activities, of Jewish loyalties—all aspects which, thanks to Herr Hitler, have been noticeably quickened by the reaction of to-day. It would be wrong to consider the mediæval and post-mediæval Ghetto as a place of unmitigated gloom—a forcing-house of repression, unrelieved by any redeeming feature. Within those dark lanes and narrow courts pulsed a life as colourful and as intense as that in the greater world outside. Human sympathies and personal relationships were exceptionally warm. Inside that little area there was an entire social nexus, with its own life, its own interests, its own diversions. There were the same petty enmities and the same jealousies to be found as in any other human circle; the same romances, the same comedies, the same tragedies of existence. There was a considerable degree of autonomy—and hence, as a natural corollary, of communal politics. There was a scholastic system of a comprehensiveness barely exceeded in any Western country even to-day. There was a passion for adult education, unknown in our more sophisticated world. No conceivable species of well-doing escaped the scope of one or the other of the many pious confraternities; and, in every hour of want or distress, the unfortunate could count upon the succour of

his neighbours, in one capacity or the other. The authority of the Rabbis was not so absolute as to stifle non-religious diversions. The *Purim* season each year saw buffoonery and masquerades, and sometimes a fair. Domestic life was pure, but the eternal triangle was not entirely absent from the human scene. The Jews, in fact, were men, endowed with human passions as well as with superhuman endurance.

The results were what might have been imagined. The circle of human interests was intolerably confined. Life became indescribably petty. There was a superlative degree of inbreeding, both physical, social and intellectual. Keen intelligences were wasted by dealing with trivial themes. That which was meant for mankind was confined to a single bleak street. The intellectual fecundity which can result only from the constant fertilization and cross-fertilization of human intercourse became impossible.

By the time that the Ghetto had been in existence for some time, it was possible to see the result. Physically, the Jew had degenerated. He had lost inches off his stature ; he had acquired a perpetual stoop ; he had become timorous and, in many cases, neurotic. Degrading occupations, originally imposed by law—such as money-lending or dealing in old clothes—became second nature, hard to throw off. His sense of solidarity with his fellow-Jews had become fantastically exaggerated, and accompanied in most cases by a perpetual sense of grievance against the Gentile who was responsible for his lot. As a counterpoise to the attempt of the authorities (and indeed of the whole world) to repress him, the Jew was driven to evasion ; and sharp practices, at one time almost condonable, retained their hold in some unhappy instances after their original justification had passed. The economic consequences were no less deplorable. Pauperization rapidly increased, the systematic blocking of opportunity making recovery out of the question. Every circumstance existed to foster the growth of a criminal class.

This is the state of affairs which the policy of Herr Hitler is calculated to restore. He asserts that it is Germany's concern alone. It is not ; it is that of the whole civilized world,

## THE ABSENTEE

By L. A. G. STRONG

THE smallish man in the corner looked up, coughed self-consciously, and made his first contribution to the discussion.

"He isn't no loss", he said, "Frank isn't".

There was a short, unfavourable silence. Old George Shapcott fixed him with a reproving eye.

"We don't require you tell us that, Arthur Treadgold", he said severely. "There's several has been here longer than you, and known the man years afore you come here."

"Ah", approved another ancient. "Years afore."

Treadgold, abashed by the disapproval, coloured and looked down again into his glass.

"All the same", said another voice from the corner. "'Tis only the truth. Frank isn't no loss. I for one shan't grumble if we never sees him back again."

The landlord, who during this interruption had been leaning on his elbows, made a sideways gesture with his hand.

"That isn't the point", he said. "We all have our own opinions of the man. But there's more to it than that." He paused, and pursed up his lips beneath his coarse black moustache. "There's more to it than that. If Frank was minded to go ——"

He broke off, as the door opened abruptly and a man stepped across the threshold. The man blinked for a second at the light, banged the door after him, and with an air of defiant unconcern walked across and seated himself at the bar, immediately in front of the landlord.

"Pint, please", he said: then, aware of the dead silence, he darted a couple of almost invisible glances right and left, blinked rapidly, and began to whistle through his teeth.

The landlord, recovering himself, moved slowly to draw the



beer. His features, more mobile than those of the others, expressed his own emotions and theirs. While they wore faces of blank surprise, the expressionless faces of countrymen taken at a disadvantage, confronted by something they have not had time to think about, his worked with obstinate slow suspicion. His thick underlip, which had drooped at sight of the newcomer, was pursed up again. His eyes, with the baggy pouches under them, had become wary. His head seemed to set more solidly than ever on the thick neck, his heavy jaw to brace itself, the purplish red of his face to deepen. Then, as he finished drawing and slid over the pint, the tension seemed to relax. It was as though one could see the man's whole frame ease and cool down. His expression became bland and infinitely cunning. He took the money, changed it, pushed the change across, and leaned forward persuasively towards his customer.

"Why, Fred", he exclaimed, in treacly tones. "You're quite the stranger. Isn't he, chaps?"

He looked round at the others, and they stampeded into speech.

"Ah, that he is."

"Quite the stranger."

"Hasn't been here this long time."

"We reckoned you wasn't ever coming to see us again, Fred."

The newcomer gave a narrow, pale smirk, and did not answer. He took a second pull at his glass. Almost lovingly, the landlord watched him.

"Ah", Fred said at last, wiping his small moustache on the back of his hand. "That's better."

"Have another", said the landlord, and reached out his hand for the glass. It checked half way, as he received a glance, swift, calculating, cold as a snake's: not so much a glance as a glitter, instantly veiled.

"Thanks. I don't mind if I do."

"That's right", said the landlord hastily. His inside had turned cold. The glance had been so swift it might almost have been a trick of the light. As he drew the beer, this time without looking up, his forces returned thickly to the battle. His manner, as he pushed over the second glass, was blander than ever.

"How is it you haven't been down to see us, then"? he asked innocently.

The lightning glance flickered again.

"Too busy, perhaps"? hazarded someone.

The newcomer frowned down his long nose.

"Maybe I was", he replied. "And maybe I wasn't."

A silence followed. Slowly, carefully, the landlord looked around the room. Easy all, said his glance. Easy. Leave him to me.

"I daresay you had a good deal to do", he suggested, "left single-handed all of a sudden".

The pale eyelids flickered, and the face over the glass went sharp and still. Certainly, Fred Ellacott was no beauty. His forehead was low, his face long, pale, and narrow, his nose sharp, and his eyes close together. It was never a face to inspire confidence, and now, alert and quivering, it suggested nothing so much as a weasel scenting danger.

But Joe, watching, felt a sudden conviction of mastery. There was cunning there, but it was an animal cunning. The man had no brain. There was nothing to be afraid of.

"Very inconsiderate of Frank, I must say", he went on, "to run off so sudden, and leave you with everything to see to yourself".

Without replying, Fred took a long pull at his glass.

"But then, he never was very considerate of other people, Frank, was he?"

Finishing, Fred set it down, and uttered a grunt that might have been affirmative.

"Can't say I ever found him so, anyway", pursued the landlord. "In fact, I've often wondered how you managed to put up with him. Downright bad, I reckon he treated you, more than once."

He looked around the room. The others took their cue.

"Ah, that he did."

"An unreasonable man to deal with. Very set in his opinions."

"Very hard in his dealings."

"That's right."

The rush of sympathy excited Fred. His face twitched.

"Still", said the landlord, reaching unobtrusively for his glass, "you don't need us to tell you what he was like. *You* know, better than anybody: living with him all those years". He filled the glass as he spoke, and pushed it back.

"Ah", said Fred. "I know."

He gave a morose, secret smile, and picked up the glass. With narrowed eyes, the landlord leaned forward over the bar.

"Where is it he's gone"? he asked.

The face shut down again. Only a sudden contraction showed how it had relaxed.

"France."

There was a movement in the room.

"Why", quavered old Shapcott, "you told us, before, he'd gone to Belgium".

Fred twisted in his seat. "Belgium or France", he snapped. "I can't remember which. 'Twas one or t'other."

"How did you know"? persisted the old man.

"He left a letter."

"Where is it?"

"I chucked it in the fire. What did it matter to me where he'd gone?"

He was suspicious again now, suspicious and angry. Joe looked reproof at the questioner.

"Of course it doesn't matter", he said soothingly. "And, come to that, he might easy have gone to France or to Belgium. He was in both, in the war. They was the only foreign parts he ever was in. So what more natural, if he was minded to go abroad, he should go to one or the other?"

"Ah, that's right."

They came in once more laboriously upon their cue.

"One or the other, 'twould sure have been."

"Well, France or Belgium", resumed Joe—

"Belgium", snapped Fred.

"Belgium, then—it doesn't matter to you, nor to anyone else. He's gone; and you've got the place to yourself. I mean", he amended quickly, "you've got all the work to do yourself".

"That's right", said Fred, after a pause.

"Well", said Joe, as if thinking aloud. "I don't know but what I wouldn't prefer that. Hard work it may be, and every-



one knows you worked hard enough before, when there was the two of you —— ”

“ Ah, that he did ”, came in the chorus, a beat late as usual. “ Uncommon hard.”

“ ——All the same, I’d sooner work harder and be my own master, and be free from anyone nagging at me all the time, than to work with someone like Frank around. What do you say, friends ? ”

“ That’s right.”

“ ’Tis dispiriting to work for a taskmaster, that’s what ’tis.”

“ Nobody wasn’t my master ”, exclaimed Fred, turning to the speaker. “ Nobody wasn’t my master, understand that. I was my own master, always. I never gave a damn for the ——”.

“ O’ course you didn’t ”, soothed Joe. “ O’ course you didn’t. But, what George means, you didn’t get the credit o’ what you done, nor yet the benefit. And there’s no denying Frank was a bullying sort.”

“ He couldn’t bully me.”

“ No. But I’ll lay he tried ? ”

A look of delighted cunning stole over the narrow face.

“ Ah. He tried.”

“ You were his match, I’ll lay ”, said Joe. “ You weren’t the sort to knuckle under to him.” His voice had softened, but in the intense silence it sounded louder than before. “ Elder brother or no elder brother, you weren’t the sort to let him trample you down.”

Stealthily, he stretched out a hand for the emptied glass.

“ I know how you stood up to him, for I’ve heard the man talk of it.” As silently as possible, he drew off the liquor. “ More than once, in this very bar, I’ve heard him complain how he couldn’t get his way with you. ‘ I’ll show him who’s master ’ I’ve heard him say. ‘ I’ll learn him.’ ‘ Ah’, I thought to myself. ‘ Will you though. I’m not so sure about that.’ ”

Sweat stood on Fred’s forehead. His hand, as it reached for the pint unobtrusively slipped close to it, did not instantly connect with its object.

“ ‘ You’ve met your match there ’ I thought ”, Joe went on. “ ‘ You may bully the rest you come in contact with, but you’ve met your match there.’ ”

He was swallowing it, the poor fool ! Joe looked around, his eyes gleaming, on the circle of awed, tense faces. Exultantly he felt his power. He had the whole room in his grip, and the besotted fool before him tightest of all.

In his joy he was led to a farther pitch of daring.

"In fact", he said, little above a whisper, "I shouldn't wonder if that wasn't the reason he's gone".

Fred sat still. Then his mouth twitched, and he hid a smirk in his glass.

Joe raised his head, his mouth half open, an indescribable expression on his face. So a man might pause, who was stalking an animal, well satisfied for the moment at having crossed a dangerous space without rousing its suspicions. At his gesture the tension slackened. The men coughed, and shuffled their feet.

"How long has he been gone"? Joe asked old Shapcott, across Fred's head.

Startled, the old man pulled himself together.

"I can't rightly say. How long is it, Sam? A month"?

"More than that", said a voice quickly. "'Twas before the drain at the foot of my meadow got choked, and that were five weeks last Friday."

"About six-seven weeks, then."

"Seven, all but a day or so."

"A long time for the man to absent himself." Joe was eyeing Fred again. "Looks almost as if he didn't mean to come back, doesn't it, chaps?"

"Ah. That it does."

"I wouldn't say that", said a dark, thickset man near the door. "If Frank went off to foreign parts, likely he'd stay a while. 'Twouldn't be worth going for a short trip."

"If he'd gone for a holiday, that might be so", Joe conceded. "But, on my thinking of it, he didn't go for a holiday." He kept his eyes on Fred. "No. I think he'd had enough, and left the place to the better man."

Fred gave no sign that he had heard. He looked straight in front of him.

"That's my belief about the matter. He tried his bullying tatticks once too often."

The room was suddenly tense again. There was not a sound. So fixedly were they all regarding Fred that, when he reached for and tilted his glass, the movement made them jump.

"That's it, chaps." Joe's voice had dropped again. "He tried his games on once too often. There was a row ——"

"Who said there was a row?"

Facing round furiously, Fred glared at the landlord. "Who said there was a row?" he repeated.

Joe leaned forward, till he was almost overhanging the smaller man. He smiled broadly, and began to laugh, a thick, soft laugh.

"Ho, ho! Fred. You artful devil. You're a nice one, you are. Going on so quiet all the time, letting us all think you were a meek, milk-and-water sort. Ho, ho! But you aren't quite clever enough. I spotted the vi'lence in you. I knew you weren't the sort to take Frank's bullying ways lying down. Ho, ho! Who'd buy *you* for a fool, eh?"

He reached forward, and nudged Fred in the ribs. For an instant the man stiffened. Then, in spite of himself, a simper of pride appeared on his face. He sat back, wagging his head.

Joe took the opportunity to take his glass.

"Oho", he went on, sweeping it out of sight below the counter. "You're a deep one. A regular masterpiece. Holiday abroad, indeed! Why, the fellow had to run for his life. Seven weeks! He won't be back for seven years."

"Oh, surely", objected the thickset man. "Seven years! Why ——"

"What'll you bet?" All the time he was speaking, Joe was busy with the glass. "What'll you bet?"

"I aren't a betting man. All the same ——"

"Oh, come on. They all say that, when you pin 'em down. Will you back your opinion, or won't you?" He winked furiously round upon them. For a moment they did not understand. Then, in answer to frantic nods, one spoke up.

"I'll bet with you, landlord. I'll bet with you."

"Good. There's one man among you, at any rate. Now—what shall it be? Five quid he comes back before seven years?"

"Five quid's a lot o' money", demurred the voice.

"That's my bet, anyway." Joe produced Fred's glass, and



handed it over. "Five quid he don't come back for seven years."

"You'll lose your money", said old Shapcott, moistening his lips with his tongue.

"Oh, no, I shan't."

Fred tasted his glass, started, and blinked into it. Joe eyed him, holding his breath. He seemed about to protest, then sighed, and drank again.

"I shan't lose my money."

"How do you know?"

"Why"—Joe began to laugh again—"Look at this masterpiece of a chap here. How he must be laughing at us all, up his sleeve. Knowing all about it, and not letting on. Did you ever see such a cunning clever figurehead for keeping his own counsel?"

Fred was smirking again. He sat upright, his head swaying slightly, his eyes all but closed.

"Frank won't come back", whispered the landlord, leaning on the bar. "He won't come back. And what I say is, a damned good riddance. It's my way of thinking, we ought to pass a vote of thanks to the chap who got rid of him."

"Ah."

"That's the idea."

Fascinated, sick with tension, hardly able to breathe, they sat, gripping their chairs, watching the pale smirking face, the swaying head.

Joe was bent almost double across the counter. Sweat was pouring down his face: the veins stood out at the side of his forehead.

"Tell us, Fred", he whispered, very softly, very slowly. "We're all friends here. Tell us. You did him in. Didn't you?" They could not breathe. The silence hammered in their ears.

Fred swayed, still smiling. For a few moments he made no sign. Then he gave a sudden hideous little snigger.

"Yes", he said, quite loudly. "I did him in, all right."

A deep sigh went out, the release of a dozen breaths. Then silence again. Joe's whisper was gentle and soft: he might have been caressing a child.

"How, Fred? How did you fix the bastard?"

Fred's eyes were still shut. Then he opened them, and Joe shrank back an inch from their mad cold glee.

"D'you really want to know?" he asked. "All of you?"

"Yes, Fred." Joe, smiling, blinked his eyes. "We want to know, all right. Anyone who did away with Frank did us all a good turn."

Once again, Fred sniggered. The chill of something non-human went round the room. They watched him, fascinated.

"It was with a spade", he said.

"A spade?"

"Yes. I had it in by the fire, scraping of it. He came in."

"Did he say anything to you? Barge at you, or anything?"

"No. He sat beside me, so's I could see his boots and his leggings out of the corner of my eye. Then it came over me all of a sudden, and 'You bastard', I said, and I jumped up and hit him over the head with the spade."

The violent gesture which accompanied the words almost over-balanced him. He recovered, and sat swallowing.

"Yes", softly prompted Joe. "Go on, Fred. Tell us what happened then."

"He tried to get up, and stuck half-sitting, holding on to the arm of his chair. So I hit him again, to make him let go."

"Did he let go?"

"No. He was all stiff. I gave him another then, and he let go all of a sudden, and went down on his knees, like he was praying." Again the snigger convulsed the lean face. "He opened his mouth, wide open, and began belling. I gave him three more, and he lay down quiet."

"So", said Joe, leaning back. The clothes were sticking to his body. "So that's how you fixed him, eh?"

"That's how I fixed him."

The words came slowly. Fred was rocking on his chair. Evidently he was getting sleepy.

"And where did you put him?"

"What about the blood?" put in a hoarse voice, before Fred could answer. The cunning leer reappeared.

"I washed it up, and burned the spade clean in the fire. There wasn't a drop to see by the time I done."

"Where did you put him, Fred?"

"In—the—cabbage—patch."

The men, their muscles aching, sat back limp in their chairs. Fred, his eyes closed, swayed more dangerously. He hiccupped.

"In the cabbage patch, eh?" breathed Joe. "So that's where he is."

"That's—where—he—is."

Fred spoke sleepily, a pause between each word.

"Can you show him to us?"

The answer was a long time coming.

"What d'you want to see him for? He won't be no picture." Fred sniggered again. "He's been laying there seven weeks."

"I got a fancy to see him, all the same. Haven't you, George?"

The old man cleared his throat. Joe nodded fiercely.

"I—I—ah—. Yes, that's right. I—"

"I'd like it, too."

Other voices, under compulsion of that masterful nodding, chimed unconvincingly in. A sulky, suspicious look had hardened on Fred's face.

"Well, you shan't", he said.

"Why not, Fred?"—Joe's tone was honey.

"Cos—cos I don't choose, that's all." He opened his eyes.

"My garden, isn't it? My house?"

"And your brother", put in the thickset man, with a hysterical titter.

The others frowned. They felt the remark to be in bad taste.

"Oho", said Joe. "I understand. That's the size of it, is it? I understand."

His voice was so full of meaning that it penetrated even to Fred's drowning intelligence.

"What d'you understand"? he asked thickly.

"Why you won't let us see him. Shall I tell you for why?" Once more Joe leaned across the bar. "Because he isn't there. Because the whole thing is a yarn you've been telling us, to make out what a fine bloody chap you are. You never hit him at all."

Fred spat like a cat. "Never hit him, didn't I? Very well, then. Come along, every bloody man of you. I'll show you if I hit him or no."



He rose, staggered, and almost fell. At a sign from Joe, two villagers shuffled forward and took him each by an arm.

"I'll show you." He glared with great venom at Joe. "I'll show you."

"Right you are, Fred", replied the landlord cheerfully. "You show me."

As Fred, still spitting and cursing, was led out of the door, there was a hoarse consultation in the rear.

"You run, Arthur, will you?"

"Very good, Joe."

And, pale and shaken, Arthur Treadgold hurried off down the road to fetch the village constable, while Joe and the rest proceeded slowly up the road.

Presently, as they neared Fred's cottage, feet sounded behind, and Joe, stopping to wait, was overtaken by Arthur and Hargreaves, the constable. Arthur was almost winded by the double journey. His eyes were wide and distressed in the moonlight. The constable, blowing, but in better trim, had been caught reading in his shirt-sleeves, and had slipped on an old tweed coat over his uniform trousers.

"Keep well back", whispered Joe, though the quarry was well ahead. "Don't let him see you."

"That's all right", replied the constable: and he began to question Joe, as they discreetly followed.

When they reached the cottage, and proceeded through the gate into the little garden, they heard Fred's voice upraised. Slightly sobered by the walk, he had turned truculent.

"I'll be damned if I dig him up", he was exclaiming. "Dig him up yourself, if you want him. I'm satisfied with him where he is."

"Very good, Fred", said the thickset man's voice. "Where's the spade?"

"Find it your bloody self", returned Fred morosely.

A couple of men went off, and soon returned. Joe and the constable stood well out of sight, hidden by the black shadow of a tree. The digging began, and for a while there was no sound but the turning up of soft earth.

"Is he there, Sam?"

"Can you find anything?"

"No. Is he deep down, Fred?"

"Find—him—your—bloody—self", intoned the voice, sleepy again.

The digging went on. The thickset man, his shirt-sleeves white in the moon, had recovered from his first terror. To begin with, he had hardly dared drive his spade into the earth, for fear of what it might touch. Now, relieved, feeling the whole thing might be a hoax, he let drive with a will. His companion, whom a similar dread had hampered, took fire from his example. Soon half the bed was turned up.

"I don't believe there's nothing here at all."

"Having us on, like."

"If he is, by God, we'll heave him in the pond."

"All that beer I put down him", whispered Joe to the constable. "And whiskey, too."

"Whiskey?"

"In his beer. I laced his last glass well. That's what ——— Hullo!"

The thickset man's spade had suddenly hit something that was at once soft and grated. He drove it down again, peered, then dropped his spade, turned away, and vomited.

Without a word the men grouped round. In a dead silence, broken only by the gasps behind them, they removed the earth until they could see enough. Hargreaves, accompanied by Joe, stepped forward, and looked down. He drew back, turned towards Fred, and groped in his pocket.

A couple of men seized Fred and hustled him forward. The moonlight gleamed on steel.

A sudden sense of the changed atmosphere around him penetrated to Fred's brain. He began to struggle. The whites of his narrow eyes gleamed, slits of terror.

"Here"! he cried, as they held out his arms towards the constable. "Here! You let me go. I want to go in and lay down. You let me go."

"Ah", said Hargreaves sadly, fixing the handcuffs on his wrists, a fatherly compassion in his tone. "'Tis too late for that now, Fred, I'm afraid. 'Tis too late for that now."

## EBB AND FLOW

BY STEPHEN GWYNN

### *A Monthly Commentary*

ONE cannot but admire the generous ardour with which the English people are committing themselves to a principle that they believe in, namely, the resistance to aggressive war undertaken by one member of the League against another. It is not equally possible to feel enthusiasm for their approach to the testing time. This decision has in reality been made

#### **The Testing Time**

not by Government nor by any one party in the State, but by a strong impulse of public opinion; and though possibly the Government may have thought out a line of action, public opinion certainly has not. However, certain facts are now established. The first is that the threat of economic sanctions cannot at present stop a determined Power from going to war. That threat was by no means the only deterrent; Signor Mussolini must have weighed the possible effect upon Italian interests in Europe of committing so large a proportion of Italy's military force to this African adventure. Yet neither the definite threat nor the other uncertain but menacing possibilities stopped him from completing vast preparations and striking at the first moment when the climate allowed him to strike.

Another fact is that the proposal to use collective action in defence of the League's fundamental principles tends to divide the League into jarring groups. This was only to be expected. Nations are just as slow to risk the purses as the lives of their people, and war creates a tempting market for all who have goods to sell and find difficulty in selling them—which is the case of all nations today. Further, Germany, standing outside the League, creates a rival centre of attraction, naturally potent for Austria and Hungary, its old allies, and its fellow-sufferers



in defeat. There is not only this question of economic interest, but the more vital one of security.

That is now what it has come down to. Can the League give protection? Great Britain has assumed the leadership in saying that it will. We have yet to see if it can.

**France's  
Dilemma**

All this is the dark side of the picture which has to be faced; and whoever looks at it steadily can only come to one conclusion—that the League must be declared impotent after a brief trial unless England and France, the two great free powers, work together hand in hand with utter loyalty, and give a leadership to all the lesser peoples. This co-operation cannot be a thing of the moment only: it must be a constant and pledged support in the League and for the League in all emergencies. That is what English public opinion has as yet failed to realize. It wants the support of France in this crisis, but is reluctant to pledge itself in advance to any other crisis. It wants France to break with Italy and does not understand what that means to France. When the agreement was reached at Stresa, the French were able to leave the Italian border like the Canadian one and strengthen their eastern defences by two hundred thousand men. What equivalent can England offer to France for the loss of that understanding? Even if she had not, through a mixture of economy and idealism, reduced her forces to a level dangerously low in the present condition of Europe, she would be in no position to offer the assistance of a large land force in an emergency. On the other hand, British resources in men, money, and material are so great that France, if forced to choose between her support and Italy's, would always choose England's—provided that the support is assured. For, in addition to the argument of ultimate military strength, there is an identity of aim between France and England. Both stand for freedom as against dictatorship; and as Mr. Baldwin has emphasised, this ideal is formidably challenged. Unfortunately, the superficial differences in the methods by which they pursue and express the same purpose of individual freedom are so great that each country is always in doubt of its neighbour's good faith; and until it is clearly established that each makes the League, in Mr. Baldwin's phrase, the sheet

anchor of its national policy, cordial co-operation is impossible. We are now at a testing time. If, indeed, England desires to see the League maintained as a living and growing reality, everything must be done to assure France that the League's vital principles, which England now asks France to uphold with her, will be upheld by England in every emergency that may arrive.

Given such co-operation for such an identity of aim, England and France together can organize all in Europe that shares their aim for effective action. They can make it understood that the League is not to be defended by certain Great Powers but by all its members. It is not enough that the lesser powers should vote correctly at Geneva. If they desire the continuance of a system by which they are chiefly benefited, sacrifices must be exacted from them. Unless France and England can get effective backing, the League can be of no use to them, nor they to it, and the whole machinery is better done away with. Nothing is so dangerous as a rotten support. Those powers, great or small, which value freedom, could then organize themselves, separately or jointly, for defence against militarism. And they are the vast majority in Europe.

Meantime, Italy is providing the world with several object lessons. Later on, she will enable us to judge what economic sanctions can and cannot do. But immediately, **The Face of War** at the moment we see, with eyes that have not grown callous, the face of mechanized war. It is not pretty ; dropping bombs from the air on a town does not seem so commonplace an occurrence as it was seventeen years ago. No doubt the object in war is to break down the will of your enemy by terror ; and possibly the result may be achieved in Abyssinia, though it was not in Europe. Yet in Abyssinia, unless the result is achieved by terror, very little can be done by this means. There are no nerve centres to paralyze ; and in all probability Italy can only gain a decision after a struggle as long as that of the Boer War, at the end of which the victor's exhaustion would be only a degree less than that of the vanquished.

Who wants to see Italy exhausted ? There are, indeed, it seems, some ardent spirits in England—perhaps many—that

would rejoice in an Abyssinian victory. Yet nothing could bring more danger to the world that we know—in Africa and still more in Asia. If it is a bad thing that the European should presume on his prestige, it would be a worse one that his prestige should be destroyed. For after all, less than forty years ago the Abyssinians were a people capable of mutilating after battle not only the dead, but their captives. It is to be hoped, above all for their own sakes, that this custom has been stamped out ; if one case of it were proven in this struggle, the change of feeling in these islands would be portentous. Yet—though the use of gas by Italy, if gas is used, would possibly offset even this—since the attacked are a race who at best have only just discarded such usages, I do not wish to see Italians beaten by Abyssinians.

Still less desirable does it seem that Italy should be for a long period weakened in Europe ; or that the personal power of her Leader should suffer eclipse. There are  
 After  
 Adowa  
 dictatorships and dictatorships, and most people would hold that under Mussolini's rule Italy had advanced in civilization ; just as by all the tests we know, except that of military efficiency, Germany under its present dictatorship has grown less civilized. What may be hoped is that, if Italy succeeds in securing a victory sufficient for prestige, her ruler may call a halt and express willingness to negotiate not only with Abyssinia, but with the Powers which on behalf of the League are espousing Abyssinia's cause. Such an occasion ought to be seized, although there would be a great outcry in Great Britain against concessions to Italy. That is natural. Yet Sir Samuel Hoare in his speech at Geneva indicated that the Powers were prepared to consider making concessions which should meet Italy's needs. He added, however, that this could not be contemplated in the midst of violent and threatening action. It was better to be too late than to lack due regard for decorum : an attitude only too frequently adopted by English statesmen. But he admitted in effect, what has been urged in an earlier number of this REVIEW, that compensation should be found for Italy, because under the new order of ideas she was legally debarred from such action as other Powers, within the past hundred years, had been held free to take. Apparently he meant



that it should be found in Africa. But he expressed the view that it should consist in the extension of economic and commercial facilities ; and there are undoubtedly grave objections to transferring African peoples, or any peoples, from one sovereignty to another—although no such scruples were felt at the time of the Treaty of Versailles. It is also true that it would be much better to diminish than increase the number of watertight compartments into which commercial and economic developments are cramped. But the essential thing to consider is how to find some material satisfaction which will induce Italy to abandon her design of complete conquest in Abyssinia.

This should be less difficult if Italy has a victory to stick in her cap : if the memory of Adowa is avenged. After that, what lies ahead of the Duce in Abyssinia should he persist is some three years of a guerrilla war—almost the most trying on the nerves of the civilized power that wages it, and the likeliest to breed discontent at home. The first purpose of the League powers should be to preserve the independence of Abyssinia, and place it under their own direct guardianship ; the second, to find an equivalent which Italy will prefer to the dream of complete conquest.

France would go very far to avoid a breach with Italy—or, indeed, to avoid weakening Italy. The Ministry's position is insecure ; that is nothing new in France ; but there is a real danger lest the passions roused over this dispute should split France itself in pieces. Fortunately Italy has taken a line singularly calculated to waken Frenchmen's sense of the preposterous. The Italian plea that Abyssinia by withdrawing troops from the border assumed an attitude of decisive hostility was actually anticipated by a comic paper—the *Canard Enchaîné*—which wrote on October 2nd : " Not even content with decreeing general mobilization six months after, the Emperor of Abyssinia has now decided to withdraw his troops 20 miles. When it is realized that this withdrawal is into the interior of his own country, nobody can any longer doubt his diabolically aggressive intentions ". The Italian intimation to the League followed next day. There are many ways of paying homage to the League's moral authority,

**Reductio ad  
Absurdum**

but surely no nation could do more than cover itself with ridicule. Moreover, Frenchmen will observe that whatever may be said against the League's methods, if they had been in use twenty-one years ago, it would not be possible to argue nowadays, as has so often been argued by the superfine, that in August, 1914, France attacked Germany. We are at least some way on the road to determining in all cases that may arise who is the aggressor.

The United States, as was to be expected, made it clear that if sanctions are imposed, America will not attempt to block their operation. That would indeed have been the last touch of irony in the history of American dealing with President Wilson's creation. Citizens of the United States are told that if they choose to send supplies to either belligerent, their government will not ensure their right to do so. This removes the gravest apprehension—however remote—which England had to face in taking the course which English public opinion has demanded.

Meanwhile, these events have made it as nearly certain as anything can be in democratic politics that a National Government will be continued in power as a result of the approaching election. The Conservative Party has closed up solidly behind Mr. Baldwin ; Mr. Churchill's personal tribute to his leader was notable. Liberals appear to have signified complete support. Labour, not unnaturally, has split, for in the first place Mr. Lansbury has once more asserted his out-and-out pacifism, yet the bulk of Labour perceives that if England is to help, and even to lead, in keeping the peace, England must re-arm. The extreme Left, however, apparently hold that to resist Italy's enterprise is to encourage the growth of Fascism in Great Britain. Sir Stafford Cripps, that voice of the proletariat, will trust nobody but a government of working men. As to the Communists, their pitch is shockingly damaged by Russia's support of the British attitude.

In short, all sections in England want to support the League, though they may differ as to the ways of doing it. Meanwhile,

Italy loses no opportunity of declaring her goodwill to France and even to England, except in so far as England persists in supporting the League—which Italy stigmatizes as the enemy. Yet she is noticeably reluctant to break her connection with it : a reluctance which shows that Italy at large does not willingly face a hostile verdict from Christian civilization. Herr Hitler had no scruples of this kind. He has an ideal, and neglects no means to impose it—an ideal which virtually challenges all those elements of Christianity whose value has been plainer to the world since the Great War than ever before it. It is evidently only a question of time before an open breach must come between him and the Christian Churches whose teaching he seeks to adapt to his own personal creed. The Duce—and this is the really tragic element in the situation—remains attached to that civilization which, at whatever remove, is based upon Christianity. He does not invoke Mars against Christ. What he does claim is the right to do as many Christian nations, and notably the French and English, have done before him in quite recent history, and have been proud of doing. That he should be denied the right to act so, in the name of a new system of rights and duties, is a true hardship. Those who desire to keep Italy within the ambit and influence of this new order—and it is not impossible—are bound to consider by what means, and by what honourable sacrifices this can be achieved.

Meantime, proceedings at Geneva continue with deliberation that is in a measure exasperating but none the less impressive.

**The League's  
Dissenting Voices** Italy has attempted to reduce them to futility by insisting that a vote of the Assembly to be effective must be unanimous. If this objection had prevailed, the League must have been reconstituted; for as Mr. de Valera pointed out in a broadcast from Geneva, no deliberative machinery can be of any use if one vote in many can bar a positive result. Austria has separated herself from the other States, on the honourable ground that Italy preserved her integrity—doing swiftly what the League certainly desired done, but took no part in. Hungary also separated herself, on the ground that the League had failed in its duty of remedying grievances—and therefore that Hungary would not make a grave economic



sacrifice. It was a useful reminder that nothing stable can be established in Europe if the Treaties of Versailles and of Trianon are to be regarded as Europe's last word. Hungary's protest and Italy's action point to the need for a general review of the manner in which opportunities are distributed among the nations forming the League. A weighty speech of the Archbishop of Canterbury, after condemning in the strongest words Italy's action, went on to emphasize this need.—On the other hand, facts are reminding us that even in this imperfectly organized world, violence may not prove profitable. Italy's war looks an ugly business. Unless she can maintain intact two if not three wholly separate lines of communications, which do not support each other, the force whose line is seriously threatened must withdraw; if the line is cut, the force may probably be unable to withdraw. Abyssinians are imperfectly armed, but they possess a talent for war. Indeed, if they did not, Abyssinia could not have maintained its existence for all these centuries against the Moslem menace. Their chief instructor, the Swedish General Virgin, has dwelt on the instinctive power of manœuvre they possess—wheeling in concert like plovers on the wing; and it is evident from the speech addressed to them by the Negus that they understand fully how to make things difficult for an army who relies on artillery and air attack. If they can avoid bunching, and yet retain the power to act together in swarms, no quick decision against them can be obtained; and in a prolonged struggle, climate is their formidable ally. Under such conditions the Duce, for all his formidable determination, cannot be indifferent to the fact that Europe at large will use all means short of military sanctions to increase his difficulties; and that the United States assumes an attitude which can only be construed as approving Europe

Those who care to know what Ireland is really like (under the existing conditions) will be well advised to read one of the shrewdest and most amusing books ever written about it—*The Spirit of Ireland*, by Lynn Doyle. It has the appearance of a guide-book furnished with the usual illustrations, in about ten times the usual quantity—nearly 150 of them, well selected—but the author tells us

**The Ireland  
of Today**

at once that guidebook it is not. He is quite right. It is an essay on Ireland, written by one who knows Ireland as few men can know it, yet who until he came to write had never set eyes on the western sea-board or anything south of the Dublin district. Thus it has an odd freshness of response to nearly all that is most beautiful in Ireland, and has also most intricate and practised familiarity with Irish life. Mr. Lynn Doyle is known to a wide circle as a writer of broadly humorous Irish stories ; to a smaller one by his charming study, "An Ulster Childhood" ; and to his personal acquaintances as the manager of a country branch in the Free State of a bank directed from Belfast. Except the dispensary doctor and parish priest, no man has such intimate contacts through a countryside as the bank manager, and perhaps he does not see the most lovable aspect of Irish character. Yet evidently Mr. Lynn Doyle identifies himself with the profession of faith which he attributes to a friend. "I was born in the North", he said ; "I would die for Ulster ; but in the meantime let me live somewhere near Dublin." In this same "scandalously Laodicean" temper he discourses at large upon the aspects of politics and of religion in Ireland—all facets of Irish life, illustrated by apposite stories told with that brevity which is the mark of accomplishment. One pregnant saying is that the average Irishman "worries far less about his overdraft than his bank-manager does". But then, as he says, "you must not take a countryman's opinion of his neighbours"—and why a bank-manager's of his clients ? This observer does not regard the tradition of Irish wit as a superstition, but he recognizes its acid flavour. "Everybody in Kerry knows everybody else in Kerry, and nobody in Kerry speaks well of anybody else in Kerry", is a phrase he quotes. On the whole, no Irishman north or south can read Mr. Lynn Doyle without feeling that his love of Ireland is nurtured by knowledge ; but no Irishman, whether of north or south, can read many pages of this book without feeling a sudden stab : Mr. Lynn Doyle has run a puckish pin into one of his tender places.—As to Englishmen, it will increase their tendency, which was very marked this year, to go more and more to Ireland for diversion.

# THE FORTNIGHTLY LIBRARY

## THE NOVEL IN SCOTLAND

By ERIC LINKLATER

MR. EDWIN MUIR recently suggested that "the most vital work in prose fiction for some time now has been done on the periphery of the novel. . . . When people no longer believe very strongly in a society they cannot believe very strongly in representations of it either. They do not want a skilful picture of a scene that has ceased to convince them".

That there is more vitality—and by inference more scope for vitality—on the periphery of the novel than in its traditional circumscription is, I think, a matter for argument. The activities of extra-galactic space, because of their unexpectedness, have a liveliness that may seem to outshine the more familiar luminaries; but the Galaxy does not necessarily grow dimmer. This, however, is an extraneous debate. When Mr. Muir says we cannot very strongly believe in literary representations of a society we have ceased to believe in, he is on firmer ground; and this firm ground may be a useful vantage point from which to consider the Scottish novel of to-day.

Social life in Scotland has at present no peculiar and individual significance. It has no essentially native culture to inspire it, no sense of independent nationality to integrate it. It is derivative and provincial. To pretend that everyone

in Scotland is conscious of this provincialism and, in a special sense, of insignificance, would of course be an overstatement; but Scottish writers, almost without exception, are painfully aware of it. Their reaction to the Scottish scene is therefore likely to be evasive, or lacking in conviction, or minutely selective. They may avoid Scottish themes; or deal with them in a parochial spirit that belittles what is already small enough; or confine themselves to some remote parcel of geography, to some distant fragment of life, and find in that solitary corner a significance that is clearly lacking in the whole. Naomi Mitchison, for example, has done her best work in Sparta, and on the antique shores of the Black Sea. The parochialists are too many to count. And among the selectivists Neil Gunn is easily the first with his *Grey Coast* and *Morning Tide*: in these books he has done work that is artistically satisfying, but which has little relation to the main stream—such as it is—of Scottish life; they are not Scottish novels in the sense in which Sinclair Lewis's novels are American.

An interesting attempt to meet the need for a large-canvas novel was recently made by George Blake in *The Shipbuilders*. He chose for



his background the declining riches and importance of the Clyde. The theme is large enough, and his stage is properly set with the scenery of tragedy. But his principal characters are insufficient either for scenery or argument. They are three in number: a shipbuilder faced with the regrettable fact that, for him, shipbuilding is no longer profitable; his wife, surrounded by the boredom of Scottish society; and a riveter, sometime the shipbuilder's batman, confronted with unemployment. The shipbuilder, despite care in his creation, obstinately resembles someone seen in a passing first-class carriage. His wife is a mere pencil sketch, a conventional outline of something in which Mr. Blake is clearly not very interested. The riveter, however, has been created with much more vigour. He is a living and likeable person, and in his amusement and among his friends a dependable guide to the manners of Scotland's industrial majority. But as if unsure even of his importance, Mr. Blake undermines his character with sentimentality. He makes him a little bit too good to be true, and a little bit too true to certain fictional standards to be good for art.

Now there must be some reason for this failure to create characters congruent with the strength of the story, for Mr. Blake can write, think, see, and feel with all the necessary skill, clarity, percipience, and emotion. When he writes of the Clyde itself, with its empty yards and its world-pacing history he is magnificent; he can make a list of dead shipbuilders' names

sound like a Homeric catalogue of heroes; he can find abundant riches in crowded places or in a small domestic atmosphere; and he can create minor figures with certainty and economy. Why, then, does he fail with his principals?

Surely the reason is to be found in Mr. Muir's diagnosis: he is not able to believe very strongly in the specific importance of Clyde shipbuilders, their wives, and their conservative employees, and therefore he has not given his representations of them sufficient force. They are decaying orders that Mr. Blake has written of, and he had not the excitement of publishing a new thing when he described their decay; for that was already too well known.

A dozen rural counterparts to this picture of industrial decline could be found in any Scottish bookshop, and most of them would at least mention, if they did not depend on, the depopulation of the Highlands, the Circcean men-into-sheep translation of the nineteenth century, and the ingenious discovery of deer-forest and grouse-moor when the sheep-runs had become too sour for mutton. The confectioners of these country matters are mostly young, and a laudable indignation often breathes life into characters that are otherwise of no great interest. But their range of characters is necessarily small—shepherds and crofters, a dissatisfied young man, a girl or two for seduction, some English visitors seen and heard from a distance—and genius itself cannot make bricks without straw. Here we come to more sterile ground than Mr. Muir was speaking of. Here is not society no longer able to convince, but society

scarcely able to exist. Had Balzac been born in the Scottish Highlands he might have become a northern Gilbert White, but he could never have been the author of a Human Comedy, for the sufficient reason that there is not enough humanity to make such comedy.

It is true that in Ireland, where certain districts may superficially resemble the Highlands, there are writers of abundant vigour, talent, and significance. But Irish writers have two advantages; they had, not long ago, a capital in which a group of people were definitely and perhaps defiantly intellectual in their interests; and they have now a sense of national achievement, of national importance and individuality, of being alive in the midst of significant and largely successful effort. You cannot easily find in Scottish letters of today anything that equals the literary vitality of Seán O'Faoláin and Francis Stuart, for example. There is passage after passage in their work that reads as though the rising sun were behind it; they are excited by loveliness as one can only be at the renewal of the year. But it is more than a century since Edinburgh was a home for intellectual interests or for speculation—save on the Stock Exchange—while athletic exploits at Murrayfield and on the golf-links are all that can give us a feeling of national achievement.

There was, till a few months ago, when he most untimely died, a Scottish novelist who had made, out of his own intensity of feeling and the seemingly unpromising material of the eastern lowlands of Scotland, something that came as near as makes no difference to being a really great novel.

I mean Lewis Grassie Gibbon, whose Scots quhair—the three novels *Sunset Song*, *Cloud Howe*, and *Grey Granite*—is *sui generis*. In the first place Gibbon invented a prose rhythm that successfully evoked the sound and temper and physiology of country speech; and in the second place he had a definite historical conception of society and a definite philosophy. He believed in the primitive beatitude of mankind, and he believed in the possibility of a return to happiness through Communism. He did not believe in Communism as a social terminus. He once wrote to me: "I loathe organization, control, the state, and the voice of the serjeant-major. As the sole surviving specimen of Natural Man to be found in these islands, I'm naturally an anarchist. But how you or I, or—more to the point—our unfortunate progeny, can attain real freedom and fun without the preliminary conditioning of Communism is beyond me. Communism's merely a means to an end—a nannie enforcing on the dirty little boy who calls himself Man the necessity for scrubbing the back of his neck and keeping his regrettable bowels in order. When he grows adolescent and can do these things automatically, and has ceased to smell quite so badly, he'll be a much better equipped specimen for his chosen mission of playing football with the cosmos."

Whatever one may think of his politics, it may safely be said that Gibbon was the only Scots writer of his generation to dare suppose that playing football with the cosmos was his chosen mission. But he was an audacious person. To invent a new

prose rhythm and write three full-length novels in it was plumed and high-horsed audacity; and to come so near success as he did was to demonstrate the genius that justified it. The best of his writing, that in the words of one man may evoke the speech of a whole countryside, has a spell-like quality. It marvellously presents the flavour of speech, and suggests a life in which speech, not writing, is still the proper means of communication. But when, in the third volume, the story comes to town, the ingenious rhythm has to some extent to be abandoned; while Communism, as a literary inspiration, seems hardly so useful as the life of the soil that innervates the earlier volumes.

Gibbon's death was a grievous loss to Scotland, and I can see no signs

even of a cosmic skittle-player among those who survive him, unless perhaps in John Allan, whose *Farmer's Boy* has a quality of delight that is rare in Scottish writing. A rich, native, rather lazy, but whole-hearted delight in men and women, food and drink and the Scottish countryside, is indeed the salient characteristic of his book. It begins, "I was born on the afternoon of the day on which my grandfather signed his third Trust Deed on behoof of his creditors . . . the only form of literature in which our family have ever achieved distinction". Such contempt for polite conventions—the book is a kind of autobiography—has not for a long time been the mark of Scottish authors; and Mr. Allan has set a noble example in jilting respectability.

## **SHEED & WARD**

### **BARCHESTER PILGRIMAGE**

**By RONALD KNOX**

Large Cr. 8vo. 288 pp.     **7s. 6d. net.**

The story of Barchester is carried down in a series of episodes to the present time; and since Trollope's day much has happened in Barchester that would have invited the mordancy of his pen even more pressingly than the Barchester he knew.

**31 Paternoster Row, E.C.4**



## THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

By E. H. CARR.

**THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION, 1917-1921**, by W. H. Chamberlin. *Macmillan*.  
2 vols. 42s.

THE historian sits down ten, a hundred, a thousand years later to understand the significance of a certain series of events. Long before him, the contemporary statesman, politician and diplomat have been confronted with the same task. The contemporary should, in theory, enjoy all the advantages. But suffering as he does from the super-abundance of his material and, above all, from his own preconceived ideas and prejudices, he generally comes off second best.

No important historical event has been more thoroughly misunderstood by contemporaries than the first Russian revolution of March, 1917. By the Duma politicians, the representatives of that small but voluble class, the Russian *intelligentsia*, the aim of the revolution was assumed to be the establishment of a constitutional democratic republic. The French and British Governments, by a remarkable feat of misplaced ingenuity, persuaded themselves that it was a revolt against the latent pro-German tendencies of the Czar's Court, and would lead to the more vigorous prosecution of the war. The majority of the Bolsheviks, more or less profoundly versed in Marxist theory, thought that this was the *bourgeois* revolution corresponding to the events of 1848-49 in Western Europe. Time not yet being ripe in backward Russia for the proletarian revolution, their task was therefore to participate in the only possible revolution of the moment and support the Provisional Government.

If Carlyle had wanted (which is perhaps unlikely) to include Lenin among his heroes, he would have had to create a new category: The Hero as Intellectual. No other great man of Lenin's calibre has owed so much to sheer intelligence. He had none of the usual qualities of the leader of men. He was not a man of commanding presence, not an orator, not a soldier, not even a negotiator. His gifts were those of understanding. From the first moment (and it is perhaps significant that he was not in Russia at all, but in Switzerland) he understood that the Russian revolution was the pure and undiluted product of war-weariness, and that it would turn against any regime and any party which wanted to pursue the war. It does not today sound a particularly abstruse discovery. But in 1917 nobody except Lenin made it.

Lenin was amongst the best theorists of the Social-Democratic Party. But while most of his colleagues twisted the facts to suit Marxist theory, Lenin twisted Marxism to suit the facts. It did not bother him that, according to Marx, there could be no proletarian revolution until the *bourgeois* revolution had run its course. It did not bother him that, according to Marx, the peasantry was a conservative and reactionary force—the natural enemy of the proletariat. It did not bother him that, according to Marx, a backward country like Russia could never lead the way to world revolution. He returned to Petrograd in April, 1917, and, in the famous "April theses", adjured an astonished party to fight tooth and nail against the Provisional Government and

the prosecution of the war, and to work for an immediate joint revolution of the proletariat and the peasant.

Mr. Chamberlin has written the first tolerably impartial history of the Russian revolution. It was not an easy task. For while nearly everyone is now agreed about the role played by Lenin (the story of Lenin as a German agent having been relegated to well-deserved oblivion), every other important issue is the subject of vigorous dispute. To the original controversy between Red and White has been added the equally bitter antipathy between Trotsky and Lenin's other principal lieutenants.

History has condemned the Whites; and Mr. Chamberlin is concerned to find not so much the extenuating circumstances, as the causes, of their failure. Perhaps the strongest impression which emerges from Mr. Chamberlin's narrative is the prevailing sense of unreality in the anti-Bolshevik camp. Words were made to do duty for deeds. When at a War Council in 1916 Denikin, then a General on the Western front, accused the Provisional Government of "dragging our glorious banners in the mud", Kerensky rushed up to him, clasped him warmly by the hand and thanked him for having expressed his opinion so honestly. That was the only sort of response Denikin's protest got. When the Bolsheviks had seized power and Krasnov somehow managed to muster 700 Cossacks for a counter-attack, Kerensky had, even at this moment, to go through the solemn performance of appointing Krasnov "commander of the army marching on Petrograd" and congratulating him on his new honour. Even the relatively level-headed Kolchak could not resist the inopportune and melodramatic gesture. "History will never forgive me if I surrender what Peter the Great won", he declared when pressed to recognize the independence of Finland and thus secure Finnish support for Yudenich.

There was indeed on the White side no outstanding, and (with one or two exceptions) scarcely even a reputable, figure. Mr. Chamberlin exhibits a certain predilection for Denikin, whom he exhibits as honest, though muddle-headed, and less addicted to grandiloquence than some of his colleagues. It is, nevertheless, undeniable that the scandals and atrocities which accompanied the advance and the retreat of Denikin's armies were, on the whole, even more notorious and less excusable than on the other White fronts. Mr. Chamberlin shows (it has not been done half so clearly before, in English, at any rate) how the civil war grew gradually, almost accidentally, out of the attempt of the Allied Governments to utilize the Czech legions as a weapon against the Bolsheviks. It is the gloomiest chapter in the tragic history of the revolution.

On the Bolshevik side, the predominant personality next to Lenin was indubitably Trotsky. He was not an intellectual like Lenin. He had no instinct for dealing with his fellow-workers as individuals; and this weakness was the cause of his downfall. But as an organizer and as a mass leader, he had genius of a high order. There was about him a touch of heroic recklessness, which he exhibited with striking effect (and with full regard for its publicity value) during the Brest-Litovsk negotiations, and which proved of incalculable value in the desperate conditions of the civil war. In retrospect, it seems doubtful whether, without Trotsky, the Soviet state could have survived the successive military crises of the intervention period.

Mr. Chamberlin's narrative is vivid as well as scholarly. Drab and terrible as any story of life in Soviet Russia during the first year of the revolution must be, it has a dramatic and a human quality to which he does full justice.

## PORTRAIT OF A BOURGEOIS

By W. HORSFALL CARTER.

**GUSTAV STRESEMANN:** His Diaries, Letters, and Papers. Vol. I. Edited and Translated by Eric Sutton. Macmillan. 25s.

**FRUSTRATION:** Stresemann's Race with Death, by Antonia Vallentin. Constable. 5s.

THIS long-awaited English rendering of the Stresemann papers contains no surprises, certainly no shocks such as, apparently, caused distress to many good Frenchmen who were votaries of the Briand policy—and savage glee among the chauvinists—when the French version appeared two years ago. Henry Bernhard's labour of love, filling three German tomes, has necessarily had to be compressed; even so, the present volume only takes us up to the end of 1924. But it tells us enough of the man to substantiate the general verdict over here that Stresemann was at once a good German and a good European, as representative of the solid virtues of the German bourgeoisie as Hitler is of their utter demoralization. Nor does one get the impression that any damaging material has been carefully excised for the greater moral comfort of English readers.

His personal relationship with the Crown Prince has always been thrown up against Stresemann as a stain on his democratic-Liberal character. From the half-a-dozen Letters included in this *Vermächtnis* it is quite clear that Stresemann's conduct and attitude was beyond reproach. When "Little Willie" intimated in the summer of 1923 that he was "fed up" with living an exile in Wieringen (Holland), it was perfectly natural that the Chancellor should offer

to use his influence "with the Parties and the Government" to secure permission for his return to Germany. The ex-Crown Prince had sedulously held aloof from domestic politics in the troubled years that followed 1918, and Stresemann felt that, though extremism of Right and Left was putting the Moderates' capacity for government to a severe test, the Republic itself was so firmly established that the danger of any agitations consequent upon the Crown Prince's return was negligible. And he was quite right, of course; to be on the safe side, however, he counselled that the returning exile should take up his abode at Oels, out of the way of the political wheel. In a Germany so ravaged by political partisanship (for a detailed study Mr. R. T. Clark's *Fall of the German Republic* should be consulted) Stresemann's action seems to us now to have all the effulgence of a good deed, simply accomplished. The note throughout his Letters rings true; here is the ordinary everyday Teuton rooted in the national tradition, whose civic probity does not exclude a certain effusive deference in the presence of royalty.

In these days "bourgeois" has become almost a term of abuse. It conjures up visions of a sleek, comfort-loving, unimaginative personage, a creature so steeped in complacency and materialism that his spiritual attributes are atrophied, and he remains, in Professor Laski's words, "obstinately enfolded within the sphere of private interest". Stresemann is as different from that caricature as can well be imagined; yet his physical



appearance did not deceive, every feature of his personality depicted here reveals him to have been the embodiment of the German middle class.

His origin, as the youngest son of a publican who had "come up in the world" stamps him. Fully susceptible to the glamour of the student world, he made no bones about descending from academic heights to write his thesis on the development of the bottled beer trade in Berlin as a contribution to a practical middle-class policy. In his student days the romantic idealist, ever lurking just below the surface of the middle-class business man, came into his own—that winning figure, "Bertrand de Born," evoked by Frau Vallentin in her womanly way; but, when he fell in love with the typical Lotte of good family, practical sense supervened to give the quietus for a time to his youthful enthusiasms for Goethe and Napoleon, and he very soon found his niche as manager of the Union of Saxon Chocolate Manufacturers, shortly after merged into a general Industrialists' Association. In his position as secretary he early came into conflict with the henchmen of "heavy industry", already disclosing those feudal proclivities which have made of them in recent years ready accomplices of the Junkers in riding roughshod over the commercial class.

Without any marked intellectual capacity, Stresemann was one of those rare beings possessing an inner harmony. It found expression in robust common sense and unquenchable optimism. And, despite his background, and his bitter Ministerial experience at the height of the "war in the Ruhr," he maintained from the beginning his belief in the primacy of politics over economics. "No surrender to France on the question of German sovereignty over Rhine and Ruhr, but readiness to secure any reasonable compromise on the actual payment of Reparations"—that was

his policy, presented in an honest, matter-of-fact way, one that is perfectly intelligible to us, and was so long in achieving results only because M. Poincaré and his friends could never make up their minds whether they wanted the victim's money or his life! Politics, to him, however, was not the party game; it was the supreme means of expressing those spiritual and moral forces of the country which were his bourgeois pride. Nothing can have been more galling to him than the pettiness of the professional politicians. We can see now that he was absolutely right to press for the widest possible sharing of responsibility with Social Democrats in the 1923 Great Coalition and German Nationals introduced after the London Conference of August, 1924. His contempt for the so-called "National" or "Patriotic" Associations because they disclosed no sources of spiritual strength has, too, been abundantly justified.

In the *Scheinblüte* that characterizes the period of the Dawes Loan, the majority of his own middle class were seduced from spiritual values to put their faith in Mammon. They were then no more in the mood to listen to Stresemann and his bourgeois spirituals. So, in his last days, we know, he staked everything on being able to hand on the torch to idealistic youth. It was too late. In that sense the title given to the new edition of Frau Vallentin's brilliant pen-picture is apposite. Yet he had achieved a great deal, and had there been a few more plain, honest bourgeois like Stresemann, the present neo-barbarism would never have raised its head.

It must be said that this volume of memoirs, being mainly concerned with Stresemann's navigation of the eddies and whirlpools of German parliamentary politics, makes rather tedious reading. The next volume is likely to be far more interesting.

## JAPAN TODAY

BY ERNEST H. PICKERING, M.P.

**THE PROBLEM OF THE FAR EAST**,  
by Sobei Mogi and H. Vere Redman.  
*Gollancz.* 5s.

**JAPAN IN CRISIS**, by H. Vere Redman.  
*Allen & Unwin.* 6s.

WHEN I was recently in Japan I strongly advocated that the Japanese themselves, despite language difficulties, should use the English medium for making the Western world better acquainted with Japanese problems from the Japanese point of view. *The Problem of the Far East* is an excellent attempt to do this, but, since Mr. Mogi has enlisted the co-operation of Mr. Redman, one could wish that the latter's literary influence had been more completely in evidence throughout the book. For Mr. Redman himself has an easy English style, but there are certain parts of this book where the reader is likely to be repelled by the formidable structure of the sentences. This is a pity, for the matter is of really great value, and it is presented in a thoroughly impartial spirit. It is a book that can be read to great advantage by all, even by those who are well acquainted with the Far East, for it presents, with a surprising amount of exact detail, the geographical, economic, historical and political conditions both of China and Japan.

The prevalent note is one of scientific impartiality. Thus, in the Introduction we are told:—"As German imperialism just before 1914, preparing to cull the fruits of Bismarckian statesmanship, was followed uncritically by the German people, so in determining the fate of rising Japan, the leaders and the people of the country acted, as in the present

day, for the national glory, without a clear understanding of the real conditions faced by every people of the world, irrespective of race or creed". In the chapter on political institutions we do indeed get glimpses of the possibility of real political democracy, but we are left under no illusions about the difficulties in the way. We are told most definitely that "there is little more academic liberty, or freedom of the Press, or of association in Japan than in reactionary Italy or Germany, not merely as a result of the Police Peace Preservation Law, but also as a result of the 'Lynching Law' of the fascistic or chauvinistic societies which venture to commit arson or murder when dealing with people alleged to be animated by sentiments less patriotic than their own" (p. 60). The authors also declare that the constitution is only a "quasi-constitution", i.e., "one determined solely by the sovereign" (p. 82). The chapter on Labour and Socialist Movements is most informative and interesting, and we are able to understand not only the actual weakness of the Trade Union movement in Japan, but the reasons for this. Only the Seamen's Union approximates to our idea of a trade union, and that mainly because the nature of sea-faring work brings the workers into most intimate contact with the other unions of seamen throughout the world.

Regarding Manchukuo, we are told, perhaps almost too absolutely, that "the Japanese authorities will be forced to consolidate the sovereignty of Manchukuo with that of Japan" (p. 211). The conclusion of the book deserves serious attention, the more so as it is

based on such impartially presented facts. It is that Japan's "economic needs lie . . . in the field of international trade. If those needs are not recognized, or, being recognized, are then conveniently ignored by the other Powers, then no one can predict anything as to the result except its gravity. That the militarists were able to regain power in Japan is due to momentary political circumstances; that they have been able to retain it is due to the fact that the capitalists have supported them, as the result of the international restrictions on foreign trade". With regard to China, the authors urge that the two great Western powers most concerned, Great Britain and the U.S.A., must come to some agreement with Japan based on a full recognition of Japan's peculiar needs.

I know of no other book dealing with Far Eastern problems which gives so much useful information in so small a compass. But the Index could be much improved.

Mr. Redman's book, *Japan in Crisis*, is a collection of sixteen articles written during the past three critical years in Japan's history. The author frankly tells us that most of his living is derived from Japanese sources, but that certainly does not prevent him from being critical, often wittily so, of much that Japan has done. Several of the articles are of real value, notably *Tokyo versus Geneva*, *The Economics of Crisis* and *The Rise of Camp Government*, which last shows most vividly the relation of the military both to the Government and the people. But the article which will impress most people is surely the one called *War Behind the Times*, in which, most satirically he contrasts the Japanese attitude to the 20,000 Chinese in their midst, during the Manchurian and Shanghai incidents, with the attitude of Western peoples to the aliens in their midst during the Great War.

**RACHEL THE IMMORTAL:** a Frank Biography, by Bernard Falk. *Hutchinson*. 18s.

EVERYTHING of consequence about Rachel and her theatre (that is to say her life of art) could be said in a short monograph illustrated by a few contemporary lithographs or drawings, and enriched by the impressions of the many notable men, from Disraeli to Emerson and Matthew Arnold to Sainte-Beuve, who had just seen her on the stage and wrote warm and breathless from the experience. Nothing else is truly necessary to our knowledge of an actor or actress. The familiar distinction between front-of-the-house and back-stage is never more clearly marked than in theatrical biography. The pass-door leading from auditorium to scene, which is so mysteriously hard to find and so heavily armoured by local authorities in precaution against fire, is actually a means of communication between two utterly different worlds. The impression gained by the spectator on his own proper side of the curtain has been illusory but true; that which now appears to his initiate eyes is realistic but false. And therein consists the paradox of this art of theatre which to many people appears to be no art at all, but a preposterous accretion of folly and vanity to the rather childish business of make-believe. The only theatrical world of permanent value is the one that is in its process and its essence fleeting. The other, though palpably more historical, is often clouded by a depressing association of private indiscretion and public tittle-tattle.

Mr. Falk's book is very much concerned with this second world, which is well summarized on his title-page in the description of Rachel not only as the Immortal, but as "stage-queen, *grande amoureuse*, street urchin, fine lady". If you like that sort of caption you will assuredly like the book, which reads much in the style of a film scenario



ready-made and abounds in *clichés* ("her wits sharpened by daily contact with the grim realities of life" is a type of observation that recurs in every paragraph). The illustrations, including a dozen special plates of incidents in the heroine's life, are mostly bad enough to approach the fantastic. From cradle to grave the narrative is coloured by a lively sense of the scandalous, and no attitude is more characteristic in the narrator than one hand uplifted in reprehension of a fault, while the other hastens to turn a page of memoirs or letters to find some more.

All this, however, has been discounted in advance by the declared intention to present a frank biography; and the reader prepared to waive questions of taste and look for theatrical and other information will not by any means go unrewarded. He will even discover that some of the less likeable features derive from the subject of the portrait and not from its treatment. Rachel was not one of those theatrical scamps (and they have been many) who sin only to be instantly forgiven. We can believe that she gave herself much more freely and generously to her public in the playhouse than to any of the lovers who waddle rather monotonously through these chapters. Most of her adventures bear an unattractive mark of calculation; and none more so than her amorous partings, those true tests of temperament and breeding. She has her place in the social history of nineteenth-century France, and especially in that of the romantic period. It is possible that no other time would have liked her or suited her so well. Mr. Falk himself does not like her, and it is one of the merits of his elaborate portrait that he makes no pretence in the matter. Undeniably, at the same time, he creates an actual woman and comes near the re-creation of an actress.

ASHLEY DUKES.

**DWIGHT MORROW**, by Harold Nicolson. *Constable*. 18s.

MR. NICOLSON, with his diplomatic experience, has had a congenial task, for it is as a diplomatist and statesman that the subject of this biography will be remembered. It is true that up to four years before his death, his career was that of a great corporation lawyer and then a banker—though the financial operations of J. P. Morgan and Co. are of a kind that is wont to affect the destinies of principalities and powers. But Morrow, as the evidence of Mr. Nicolson's narrative establishes, had already by then become what Washington journalists term "presidential timber." That most prescient of writers on American affairs, Walter Lippmann, went indeed much further than this, and recognised that in him America had at last produced a public figure of the first magnitude. One perceives that Mr. Nicolson shares this judgment, and he is so persuasive in the development of his most lucid chronicle that he may induce many of his readers to share it too.

Why, then, is the name of Dwight Morrow so little known to the average Englishman? Statesmen of Morrow's stature and unchallenged probity are sufficiently rare in American life to make this inquiry pertinent. Partly the reason was that he belonged to that rare class of men who do things and care not who gets the credit. A remarkable philosophy in a great financier, the cynic might say, but it was Morrow's guiding principle from his smallest beginnings—sometimes to the natural chagrin of his devoted wife. Another reason why he did not rise to the highest eminence is explained by the American voter's ingrained prejudice against bankers. Neither Calvin Coolidge, his college friend, nor Herbert Hoover had the intellectual courage to ignore such a disability—in the case of Hoover not

at least until 1931, when, with everything crashing around him, he telephoned to summon Morrow to Washington, and was informed that he was dead.

One is tempted to wonder what the course of history would have been if this call had come sooner. Certainly in the debts controversy Morrow would never have been guilty of the fatuous dictum, "They hired the money, didn't they?" Nor, had he been at the State Department or the Treasury, is it likely that America as a creditor nation would have followed the policy of excluding the goods of its debtors. That is at least to be inferred from letters quoted in this volume. As a banker, Morrow naturally had a broad and statesmanlike conception of international trade and finance, and, with his uncanny talent for negotiation and personal charm, carried through to almost invariable success the most formidable undertakings. His magical gift for reconciling differences with an adversary recalls the earlier Lloyd George. "He was," says Mr. Nicolson, "the most co-operative statesman who ever lived."

The chapters which tell of the gigantic financial operations of Morgans are not less illuminating than those in which Mr. Nicolson is on the more familiar ground of diplomacy. The account of the deal by which that firm, at great risk to itself, saved the City of New York from bankruptcy, may be commended as a salutary study to those who see the cloven hoof in all the doings of high finance. When we come to the War, the narrative moves to a quicker tempo and with a larger world outlook.

Morgans invited Dwight Morrow to become a partner five weeks before the outbreak of hostilities, and no private firm in the history of mankind, as Mr. Nicolson observes, ever dealt with affairs of such magnitude as thereafter devolved upon that famous house. To

the dazzling wealth which almost automatically accrued the new partner was indifferent, nay, actually resented it. His spirit sought escape into the ampler field of world politics, and the opportunity came at last in Mexico. There the arts of this "diplomatic magician" found full play. The intense distrust of dollar diplomacy which was traditional in Latin-America gave way under his spell to the friendliest relations. Morrow's achievement as ambassador in these few years may seem small compared with the great promise of his previous career. Mr. Nicolson assesses its results with studious moderation, but his sympathetic portrait does convey an impression of a magnetic personality and a powerful intellect which, if fate had ordered otherwise, might have given America one of her most distinguished statesmen.

H. R. WESTWOOD.

## NOW IS THE TIME

If you wish to keep abreast with Modern Thought and Affairs, you will find my catalogues extremely helpful.

Books for the Student and General Reader alike—all at BARGAIN PRICES.

Lists gratis.

THOMAS J. GASTON,  
76 STRAND, W.C.2

Phone: TEM. 3048

**IN PRAISE OF IDLENESS AND OTHER ESSAYS**, by Bertrand Russell. *Allen & Unwin. 7s. 6d.*

It is forbidden, I understand, to refer to our author as Earl Russell, but though he may disclaim the earl, he cannot disclaim the Russell and his new book, for all its scrappy character, has this unity: it was written by a Whig. No doubt Mr. Russell is a very advanced and radical Whig, no doubt he puts the golden age later than Mr. Macaulay did, and would have laughed a little at Lord Grey and at Lord William (not Lord George) Bentinck. But this is still a Whiggish book. Mr. Russell believes in the political and social religion of all sensible men. He refuses to contemplate the possibility that the only alternative to Communist brutality and obscurantism may be Fascist brutality and obscurantism. Surely men are not such slaves of their passions as that, for, although he may profess to regret devoting a "misspent youth to the search for truth", he does not think the search useless all the same, despite Herr Hitler who thinks it cannot be found and need not be looked for, and M. Stalin who thinks it has been found and need only be gloated or glossed over. The conjunction of Hitler and Stalin is not accidental, for Mr. Russell, identifying Communism with Moscow, does not like it. He thinks idolization of Marx wrong because (a) Marx was often wrong, (b) even if he was right, idolatry is bad for the idolators. No doubt many other reasons, emotional and "intellectual", (if, for the moment, the existence of the second class may be posited) account for Mr. Russell's dislike of orthodox Marxism and its inquisition, but two are potent. As a mathematician he may well feel that Hegelian dialectic, at the best, is not the most valuable instrument for the discovery of truth, and still more that it is no more improved by being turned upside down than most things are. Mr. Russell has also been a schoolmaster,

and the recurrence in this book of his fear of the effect of unlimited authority on the wielders of it, has an application to schoolmasters as well as to dictators. It is good, we are told, to encourage Stoicism in children, but the old methods of doing so were bad for the encouragers. Dr. Keate believed that by beating he could make boys pure in heart; Stalin believes that class-enemies can be reformed by building canals under unpleasant conditions in a severe climate. Mr. Russell, it may be presumed, believes Stalin no more than he does Dr. Keate. Against romantic nonsense about the rule of the people in Soviet Russia, nonsense reaching its height in Mr. Shaw, Mr. Russell's neat work is impressive and he is not blind, as so many Left-wingers are, to the part played, in the recent past, by abuse of the middle-classes in producing Fascism.

A good many of these reprinted pieces are slight, although even the slightest are admirably written. But Mr. Russell is full of useless information (whose utility he ably defends), and his illustrations are almost always apt as well as amusing. He notes the differences in religion produced by the climates of Norway and of Sicily, and suggests that the Norwegian hell should have been cold. But I have always been told that it was. His dislike for irrationality and for nationalism make him severe on Mazzini and he might have explained that, if Mazzini excepted the Irish from his list of nations, it was to please his English friends, just as he hushed up the truth about the South Slavs to please his Magyar friends. But not all the illustrations are apt. If the French in 1931 "forced the English to abandon the gold standard" their conduct deserves all the punishment of Mr. Russell's wit. But what evidence is there that they did and, if they did, can Mr. Russell, even with his low view of modern intelligence, suggest a reason why they should?

D. W. BROGAN.



SHAKESPEARE AS A DRAMATIST,  
by Sir John Squire. *Cassell.* 8s. 6d.

SOME of us have maintained that, unless and until the load of journalism was lifted from his shoulders, Sir John Squire would not show his quality. The first fruit of that happy freedom is before us in this book: the opening of a promised trilogy, to be followed by a second volume on the Poet, a third on the Person, of Shakespeare. Now a subject of perennial interest, already over-written and obscured, which would therefore suit few, whether only quickened by poetry or only hardened by periodical criticism, suits a man who has never lost a vein of simplicity; a man, too, with an eye for the common things that the sophisticated miss. Squire is such a man, and he summarises a huge compendium when he says that "Shakespeare is a vast shoal of red herrings".

His concern here is not with herrings but with the dramatist, the fellow who can hold an audience. How the audience was, and is, held is the theme of this book. You can really say that, while you read it, you seem to be reading of one never written about before; though, between the lines, is evidence enough of familiarity with many a red herring. That is a feat, and alas! just the type of feat by no means certain of due recognition. Yet, it is just to say, as well, that this book is one of the very few which might be read with profit by anyone interested in the way to write a good play and interested hardly at all in Shakespeare himself. Squire has killed two birds with one stone: the fellow with an unaffected interest in Shakespeare, and the man who spends covetous eyes on advertisements of how to make money by playwriting. This book, in sum, is full of tips for the latter, real tips, coming from one who has written plays himself; and full of the light that comes by approaching Shakes-

peare with the freshness of a youthful poet's enthusiasm.

The first chapters clear away lumber by reminding us what the conditions of the Elizabethan theatre were, *e.g.*, with no scenery and with a projecting platform for the rhetoric that has since made (for these same plays) elaborate scenery an impertinence. We think we know all that. Most of us fail to realize it abjectly. Squire, the innocent at home, restores the perspective. The things, the subtler things, that previous fine critics have remarked, are then sketched, to remind us of the obvious that they ignored or took for granted; enormous errors both, since the omissions have become by habit as much revered as the illuminations. These rinds removed, the great catch of the old Globe begins to be examined, and his admittedly successful way of achieving his effects. The faults in Shakespeare's plots, mostly taken over to be cobbled, are then remarked; his tricks and his devices. Examples are given of his skill in presenting character by talk, his way of getting his characters on and off the stage, the point of his frequent pithiness, the why of his frequent volubility. The minor devices of his dialogue are given by little quotations, mostly the things that nobody bothers to quote. The indispensable soliloquies are examined with a suggestion that the practice might no longer be pooh-poohed, and a wholesome prick is given to the closet play never intended or else unfitted for the theatre. The defects of these, the persistent defects, are detailed as few have had the patience to detail them. We see more clearly than before why Tennyson and Browning, say, botched their business in the theatre.

Such is the substance of the book, and its style is so unaffected that the skill and pains beneath it disappear in the pleasure of reading.

OSBERT BURDETT.

**CHARLES M. DOUGHTY**: A study of his Prose and Verse, by Anne Treneer. *Cape*. 10s. 6d.

**SELECTED PASSAGES FROM THE DAWN IN BRITAIN, OF CHARLES DOUGHTY**. Arranged with an Introduction by Barker Fairley. *Duckworth*. 3s. 6d.

THE immortality of some authors depends upon the continuance of a sort of secret society or club of initiated worshippers. Doughty is such an author. It is impossible that he can ever become popular either as a prose writer or as a poet. From time to time members of the club make an effort at proselytising the public by means of a selection from his work. Mr. Edward Garnett almost succeeded by his expert arrangement and abridgment of the *Arabia Deserta*. Now Mr. Barker Fairley, a critic who has never been sufficiently appreciated for his earlier study of Doughty and his remarkable book of Goethe, has made an attempt to sift out the more immediately appreciable passages from *The Dawn in Britain*, that magnificent anachronism over which Doughty lavished so much eccentric scholarship and so many years of his life.

It is inevitable that both Mr. Fairley and Miss Treneer should compare Doughty as a prosodist with Gerard Manley Hopkins, that poet so influential today on our younger poets. The two men were contemporaries, but Hopkins did not live to read Doughty's verse. He knew only his prose. Bridges recommended *Arabia Deserta* to him, and he replied protesting against its deliberate archaism. "But come now", he wrote to Bridges, "is it not an affectation to write obsolete English? You know it is".

It is a devastating criticism, and no matter how unwilling I may be to agree with it, I find as time passes and my taste becomes more settled towards clarity and simplicity and impersonal perfection, that I am more and more critical of

## Chanticleer:

*A Study of the French Muse*

J. G. LEGGE

This important study is illustrated by many translations from French poetry, and the originals are printed in the appendix.

Large Crown 8vo. 8s. 6d. net.

## Villon's Poems

*Edited by* LEWIS WHARTON

Introduction by *D. B. Wyndham Lewis*.

A spirited translation, showing the Villon of many moods—supreme artist, outspoken realist, and humorist. Crown 8vo. 6s. net.

## Plato's Symposium:

or The Drinking Party

*Translated by* MICHAEL JOYCE

Frontispiece drawing by Denis Tegetmeier. Hand-set by Hague and Gill, in Joanna type.

Crown 8vo. 6s. net.

## Blow for Balloons

W. J. TURNER

EDWIN MUIR: "Rich and diverse . . . one of the most brilliant and witty books of fiction."—*Listener*. Crown 8vo. 7s. 6d. net.

## In Sight of the Promised Land

GEORGES DUHAMEL

Translated by *Beatrice de Holboir*. The third volume in the *Pasquier* chronicles, a saga of family life by the well-known French author.

Crown 8vo. 7s. 6d. net.

The Publishers are Dents

BEDFORD ST., W.C.2

Doughty's verse, and even wickedly sceptical of the fundamental wisdom and character of a writer who expresses himself with such technical eccentricity. In itself, eccentricity is an interesting thing, welcome in a world where standardisation is doing such destructive work; but out of eccentricity no great, no major work of art ever came, because such work must begin from a central viewpoint in life; the poet must stand, like Shakespeare or Goethe, in the middle of his contemporary world, with the ability to express it in its own idiom and to balance that expression by means of the sanity of that central stance.

Without that point of departure, the writer's symbolism must always fail fully to cover the reality of his world, and its overlaps must cause distressing misunderstanding, areas of enigma where the higher criticism lodges like tubercule in a deflated lung. To me Miss Treneer's criticism is of this sort. Her elaborate exegetical discursions on the poems of Doughty are admirable for their piety and their careful analysis of themes and sources. But neither she nor Mr. Fairley reconciles my ear to the abnormalities of Doughty's music. Mr. Fairley attacks the problem with courage. "Doughty writes his poetry word by word", he says, "Milton, by comparison, sentence by sentence". And then again, "It is not the fault of Doughty's lines that they fail to run smoothly like Spenser's. This is their virtue. Only thus can Doughty release the energy of his single nouns and verbs and adjectives. All his liberties with word-order and his retarding punctuation find their origin and reason in his radical feeling for the unit of speech, his concrete apprehension—his thing-sense—of the isolated word".

In that passage Mr. Fairley has certainly explained the nature of Doughty's queer architecture, but he has not convinced me that it is the architecture of a poet rather than of a philo-

logist. A poet should not only trail the glory of a word's historical growth, he must also make his words cohere into a form that is living, with the possibility of lyrical or dramatic articulation. But Doughty's blank verse is clogged with a leaden fall at the line-end, and the over-emphatic punctuation to which Mr. Fairley refers serves only to drag the half-galvanic sentences to a standstill. Here is an example of the inept practice of this prosody, built not by art, but by science. It is a description of a woman plunging into the water to save her drowning lover. What an opportunity the subject offers to a poet to loose his genius for flowing rhythms. Here is the movement which Doughty gives the verse:

Then, in tough tangle weeds,  
Is Crispin, wrapped, like, wretchedly to  
perish.  
Which seen, her woman's heart went  
forth, to save.  
Careless of naked plight, she leaps,  
divine;  
And him, dead-seeming, lifts in the cold  
stream.  
Her tappet casts now on him, drawn to  
land;  
So hastily takes to her her raiment  
white;  
Chafes then his deadly limbs: and  
breathes the nymph,  
Divine, of her own pure ambrosial spirit,  
In Crispin's clay-cold corse.

That example, with its stumbling-block punctuation, its asthmatic breath-pauses, its purposeless reiteration of the word "divine", its irritating inversions, its total inability to be performed as spoken and therefore living poetry, surely destroys all the arguments in favour of Doughty's technique.

RICHARD CHURCH.

---

The reviewer of *The Fortunes of Montaigne*, in the last issue, should have been described as Arthur Symons, not A. J. Symons.



## SELECTED FICTION

**JANUS**, by George Barker. *Faber & Faber*. 7s. 6d.

**AS I LAY DYING**, by William Faulkner. *Chatto & Windus*. 7s. 6d.

**BEANY EYE**, by David Garnett. *Chatto & Windus*. 5s.

**BLOW FOR BALLOONS**, by W. J. Turner. *Dent*. 7s. 6d.

**AND LASTLY THE FIREWORKS**, by John Pudney. *Boriswood*. 7s. 6d.

THE author of *Janus* is what I should call an intellectual obstetrician, for his child of beauty is born with difficulty. It may grow into a lovely maiden, but at the moment it is not. He is like a singer who cannot learn to let his voice flow, or like the stony ground that killed the seed; he is too self-conscious; and as if he has luxuriated too long in his emotions, his emotions seem to have become corroded. It is an odd business, this relation of the artist to his ego, and neither Mr. Barker nor Faulkner seems to be entirely free of internal knots. One relies on what Valéry calls "the profound tone of (individual) existence dominating all the complicated varieties of (outer) existence", but one cannot bind oneself to oneself under pain of Narcissism.

Mr. Barker releases his experiences only with difficulty and by allusion: his processes are all effects, and his moods are all unforeshadowed, so that his characters who are Janus-faced towards death and love, obsessed by one, motivated by the other, are all the time taking the curtain before we have seen the play; and we see no play. As a psychological essay *Janus* is of great interest and subtlety, one must agree, but in so far as it projects nothing in flesh and blood, never once releases an

uncensored emotion, and is in a style that conceals more than it reveals, it does not fall within the simple literary classification of "novel". Sadly one puts it aside, but with a shrewd feeling that, in time, if Mr. Barker wills to stop immolating his individuality he may do some remarkable work on the individualities of other people, i.e., he may become a novelist.

Mr. Faulkner is not much more merciful to the obtuse. But with Faulkner one does not need to understand—the impact is like a storm, and one does not question storms. *As I Lay Dying* has all his primitive, earthy, dark forcefulness, and his personality is so intense that it works freely on us; even if it is a little daft and does tie Mr. Faulkner up in knots of technical reticences. Here he has written a short macabre novel, of his native South, in which the theme is a long buggy-ride with the coffin of an old woman who has been nine days dead. Readers will do well to begin with pages 157-168, and to know that the unexplained Christian names denote a family line: Anse Bundren married to Addie Bundren, with five children, Cash, Darl, Jewel, Dewy Dell (the daughter), and Vardaman, of whom Jewel is an illegitimate; Dewy about to produce an illegitimate, and Darl a near-lunatic. The miserable atmosphere of the Mississippi swamps is suggested with all Faulkner's usual brutality—the poverty, the floods, the harsh nature of the "poor white trash", the bad roads; indeed, it is for all its twisted technique and inchoate modern style, a pure example of the old regionalist novel with dialect (*chapping*,



*dumbling, scuttering, brogans*—a Gaelic word), and such local detail as the buzzards circling over the odorous coffin. It is not a charming book: it denigrates humanity like most modern American work; but even a reading of one incident, such as that called *Moseley*, or *Samson*, will suffice to affirm Faulkner's inimitable power.

The nearness of modern realists to romanticism is plain in Faulkner—the vague atmosphere, the suggestibility of ragged edges, the motivation of some kind of inverted pantheism. The contrast with Mr. David Garnett's crisp and classic style, pure as an outline drawing by a master, is a relief. Here one feels the assurance of a writer in an old tradition, for nobody reading *Beany Eye* could imagine for a second that the author was not an Englishman. It is simple in design. A poor demented workman is employed by a writer, goes berserk, terrorises the house and countryside for a day or two, and is sent off to Canada by his kindly employer after a period in an asylum. That is all: but it is told with such effortlessness that, in a word, it *satisfies*, is *perfect*. It is quite a sober comparison to say that, technically, Tchekov could not have done it better: he might, doubtless would, have gone deeper, extracted far

more emotion out of it, enriched the mood; but the balance would not have been so satisfyingly steady.

Some American periodicals "review" as many as a hundred books in one page, e.g., "*Autobiography*. By Rose Macaulay. Rose is always the lady". Without disrespect one might attempt to bottle Mr. W. J. Turner in the same way, for it is hopeless to try to review him:—*Blow for Balloons. Ironic, discursive, facetious; rather Sterne.*

There is a suggestion of a second volume; it should be welcome.

If what, for want of a better word, one might call the "principle of life" is missing in *Janus* but present in these other novels, one is not so sure either way about Mr. Pudney's short stories. That he is a born writer one does not need to read far to see:

"He slumped down the bags in Ducker's Field. Red and white jerseys against green and red jerseys, and a few straggling spectators on the touch-line; the stormy April light catches them, gives each movement dramatic precision. They are prophetic, the small heroism of their game against the stormy sky."

That alone should be enough to tell any publisher's reader that Mr. Pudney is for the public. But literary gift does not always imply creative power, and when a delicate story of two adolescent lovers in a riverside bungalow ends in unbelievable double suicide—one wonders. The stories are all adept, they have a quality, a poetic tone, but are they quite *real* enough? Such a story as *Earth*, for instance, where the woman in childbirth craves a box of earth to plant primroses, is of an appalling sentimentality; but the title story, on the other hand, has a rich gloominess suggesting that Mr. Pudney is feeling his way towards much better things than even the best of this volume.

SEAN O'FAOLAIN.

## —BOOKS—BOOKS—

On all subjects of interest; the publications of the Modern Fine Presses; Fiction; Children's Books and works in French and Italian.

## TRUSLOVE & HANSON

14a, Clifford St., Bond St., London, W.1

Heraldic and Court Stationery of all kinds, Bookplates, Wedding Invitations, Visiting Cards, Engraving of Dies for Illuminating and Stamping, etc.

Lists of Books and Samples of Stationery free on request.

## —STATIONERY—



**BETTER THAN DYING**, by Robert Flaherty. *Gollancz.* 7s. 6d.

**MURDER IN MIDSUMMER**, by Mary M. Atwater. *Gollancz.* 7s. 6d.

**DEATH ON DEPOSIT**, by Francis D. Grierson. *Thornton Butterworth.* 7s. 6d.

**MURDER IN OILS**, by John Newton Chance. *Gollancz.* 7s. 6d.

**WHO GOES HOME**, by Richard Curle. *Constable.* 7s. 6d.

Of these five novels, each steeped in crime, two come to us from American, and, it must be confessed, succeed in holding our interest more easily than their English counterparts. Each lays its plot in a small town in the Middle West sweltering in the midsummer heat, to whom murder comes with as great a shock and is conducive to as much scandal-mongering and wild suppositions as would happen in any English village.

In *Better than Dying* we are introduced to the town gaol, where Uncle Billy has charge of a miscellaneous bunch of local toughs, dorkie lunatics and a couple of big-time safe-breakers. Despite the sensational *décor* there are few moments of tension, save when the safe-breakers try to escape and get shot for their pains. Uncle Billy, having little to do, turns his attention to establishing the innocence of a young hotel porter charged with murder, whom he (and also the reader) believes innocent of the crime. Ponderously his mind sets to work, and chapter after chapter we are swept along the slow tide of his ruminations until a satisfactory *dénouement* confirms our faith in Uncle Billy.

With an eye more to sensation, the author of *Murder in Midsummer* gives us a close-up of the murder, and then switches us back to the old home town where, in an atmosphere of rocking-chairs and apple pies, the victim's family await his return. There are some good shots of the corpse hunt organized by the local Elks and Buffaloes, terminating in an ice-cream supper under the trees. Who the actual murderer is is left unstated,

MACMILLAN

## THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

1917-21

By WILLIAM HENRY  
CHAMBERLIN. 2 Vols.

With Maps and Illustrations.

42s. net.

"An eminently readable and fully documented work."—John Brown (*The Observer*).

"There are only two histories of the Russian Revolution which matter: Trotsky's, which appeared in English three years ago, and Mr. Chamberlin's, published last week. They will probably hold the field for some time . . . No foreigner has seen more of Russia since the Revolution, or has, on the whole, looked at it with more unbiased eyes, than Mr. Chamberlin . . . It will meet almost perfectly the needs of the detached and impartial reader who wishes to learn what happened, why it happened, and what were the forces which produced this elemental and epoch-making upheaval."—*Sunday Times*.

## GUSTAV STRESEMANN

His Diaries, Letters and  
Papers. Vol. I.

Edited and Translated by  
ERIC SUTTON from the  
German Edition.

Compiled by HENRY  
BERNHARD. Illustrated.

25s. net.

"For the English edition Mr. Sutton wisely decided on slight condensation by the omission of what was felt to be 'more ephemeral matter.' Everything relevant, however, is given in full. The translation is masterly."—*Times Literary Supplement*.

"A book well worth reading . . . One never feels the editor obtruding himself . . . Altogether, the book is worthy of its subject. One waits eagerly for the volume covering the later years, notably Locarno."—*Birmingham Post*.

"Mr. Eric Sutton's most competent translation."—*The Times*.

MACMILLAN



but one is left with a profound suspicion.

Back to England, we find in *Death on Deposit* another corpse awaiting us, neatly packed in a trunk and deposited in the vaults of the Western and Union Bank. The author, despite the ingenuity of his opening, rather lets us down at the end, for, after pointing the finger of suspicion so firmly at one character that the wily reader knows to be innocent, the last pages disclosed the murderer to be a mere super to whom only the faintest thread of a clue has led.

*Murder in Oils* is a more light-hearted venture, in which the usual amateur detective, beloved of writers of crime, successfully launches a subplot, connected with an irascible colonel and a diamond pendant, to link up fairly ingeniously with the main theme of the murdered commercial traveller. For those who like the breezy style of hero, fully equipped with airy badinage for, the bedevilment of the slow-witted police, this book should find favour.

Last on the list comes *Who Goes Home*, by Richard Curle. Here, though murder plants a clammy hand on the last chapter, it has but an incidental bearing on the main plot, which deals with the machinations of a young man with blackmail as his object. When George Tallents offered the post of manager to the estate of his sister-in-law to his young protégé he little thought how quickly the cloven hoof would show through the respectable boots of Gore Mounsel. The author, however, not content with letting the plot carry us forward on wings of legitimate excitement, seeks to curdle our blood with a quite synthetic atmosphere of horror. The conversation, moreover, smacks of *Maria Martin and the Red Barn*. " 'I pray nightly for the good of this family', muttered Bowles [the Butler]. 'May your prayers be answered,' responded George Tallents, in the same tone as he stepped out into the dark."

R. H.

### SOME CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

BARON KEISHIRO MATSUI: Japanese Ambassador at Paris, 1916-20; delegate to Paris Peace Conference, 1919; Minister of Foreign Affairs, 1924; Ambassador in London, 1925-29; Member of the House of Peers since 1929.

LT.-COLONEL H. DE WATTEVILLE: Royal Artillery and General Staff, 1900-1923; served in European War (despatches); military (assistant) editor, Royal United Service Institution. 1924-35; author of *Waziristan*, 1919-20.

ELIZABETH MONROE: Joint author of *A History of Abyssinia*, October, 1935; member of the research staff of the Royal Institute of International Affairs which produced the recent booklet *Abyssinia and Italy*.

CECIL ROTH: Author of many books on subjects mostly connected with Jewish history, including *History of the Jews in Venice*, 1930; *A History of the Marranos*, 1932; and *Life of Menassehben Israel*, 1934.

FRANK DARVALL: Lecturer in International Politics for the Cambridge University Extra-Mural Board; many review articles on international, especially American, affairs; has visited the U.S.A. repeatedly.